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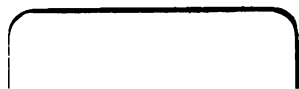
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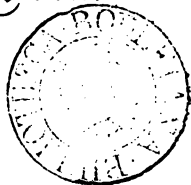
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ANOTHER QUEER BOOK.

Another Queer Book.



BY THE

REV. WILLIAM WICKENDEN, B.A.,

BEST KNOWN IN THE EAST AS "GHEREI THE ANGLO-CIRCASSIAN," AND IN
THE WEST AS "THE BARD OF THE FOREST,"

Author of

"ADVENTURES IN CIRCASSIA," "A QUEER BOOK,"
"REGINALD," &c., &c.

LONDON :

THOMAS H. REES,

ALDINE CHAMBERS, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1853.

270. c. 371.



A PRELIMINARY EPISTLE

TO MISS SCRAGGS.

DEAR MADAM,

Since the publication of my former "Queer Book," I have been in a sad lacrymose, or rather comatose, state. I have published a book, "Poems, Tales, &c.," five hundred pages, without a single joke in it!! Nay, lift not up your eyes, erect not your ears, my dear madam, it is a literal fact! a theorem as indisputable as the binomial! and thereby I am minus £39 17s. 6½d.!

"How came this about?" you will demand, in your particularly gentle and suave manner. Why, some of the men in parson-grey habiliments, some of the big nobs, thought that my Anglo-Circassian costume was too gaudy, too rollicking, too devil-me-carish by half, so they persuaded me, even me, the dogged Forest Bard! to put on a suit of raven black, to pull down the corners of my mouth, elongate my already-too-long physiog, and lift up my eyes like a duck in thunder! Only imagine the free and easy Bard—him, the ardent lover of unfettered liberty and freedom in all things—stuck into a sombre jacket,

just reaching to his loins, his arms swagging out from his sides, stiff and immovable as a couple of pokers ; leathern breeches, sticking and glueing to his thighs like pitch plasters, or a yard of hospital strapping ; big, square-toed shoes, with large copper buckles ; a shovel-shaped hat ; and, to crown all, an enormous pigtail ! Is not the picture unique and ludicrous enough to make even a mill-stone laugh ?

The loss, however, of £39 17s. 6½d. was no laughing matter to me : it deprived me of my accustomed hobs-nobs and baccy, and rendered me wishy-washy and saturnine. I grew as morose as a crabstick, sulky as a cudgelled donkey. “ The Anglo-Circassian is in love,” said one. “ Yes, and with the pig-faced lady,” said another. “ No, he aint,” said a third : “ he posted a cool thousand on Pot-oooooooo’s last Darby, and lost.” To lose £39 17s. 6½d., and to be thus jeered at into the bargain, was too much even for my philosophy, so I determined to make an appeal to the public, and open a subscription. “ Surely,” said I to myself, “ Mrs. Grundy will not allow the famous Anglo-Circassian,—him who spitted Russians by the score, split the skulls of innumerable swaggering Iberian Hídalgos, the celebrated connoisseur in sir-loins, flayer of Catholic sinners, and rescuer of Portuguese maidens from the toils of blood-thirsty banditti,—surely she will not allow him to lose £39 17s. 6½d. ! ” Whether my confidence was misplaced or not, the following list will abundantly prove :—

A Subscription to remunerate the Bard of the Forest the loss of £39 17s. 6½d., incurred

by wearing parson-grey and pulling a long face :—

	£.	s.	d.
Miss Dozy Scraggs, two fourteen-penny boxes of Poluphlosboic, Oleaginous, and Detergent Ointment, sold at half price	0	0	7
Lord Famfrizzle	0	2	6
Miss Bridget Barnacles	0	0	2½
Tom Giblets, a peck of potatoes and a bunch of greens	0	0	2½
Sally Giblets (unknown to her husband), six eggs	0	0	3
Billy Blinn, the Critic's Critic, a dish of vapid sauce	0	0	0
Bill Proctor, a brass button sold to Sniffey Sam for a Jack Prosser, the trimmings of his donkey's mane and tail	0	0	0½
Jack Prosser, the trimmings of his donkey's mane and tail	0	0	1½
Tom Trowan, an old pair of leathern breeches ...	0	0	1
Simon Shatterwit, the Hatless Critic, (qy. Atlas ?) a plate of stale flummery	0	0	0
From Miss Scraggs's assistants in manufacturing the Poluphlosboic, Oleaginous, and Detergent Ointment, as under :—			
Betty Blueskin, 1d. Nancy Smallbeer, 1½d.	}	0	0
Bella Ramsbottam ¾d. Sally Brown, ¼d.			
Kezia Trout, ¼d. Polly Bustle, 1d. Susan			
Tarbox, ½d. Lucy Strakes, ¾d.			
Tommy Tims, half-a-yard of damaged sarsnet and a ball of bobbin	0	0	1½
A second donation from Tom Giblets, with the following letter :—			
SIR,—I ham verry sorry to heer of your se- were loss, and that I be debliged to hadd I cannot allewiate it as I could vish. Howsom- dever, I send herewith a second duntion wiz a coupal of cabbages, and a string of inghans, hops they vill be deceptable ; and blieve me to remain,	}	0	0
Your debliged Pal, TOM GIBLETS.			
Carried forward ..	£0	4	8½

	Brought forward	...	£0	4	8½
30	Miss Dolly Wrynose, a dish of tripe and trotters		0	0	2½
	Total amount of Subscription	...	£0	4	10½
	Original loss through wearing drab and pulling				
	a long face	...	39	17	6½
	Received in small sums, from divers benevolent				
	individuals	...	0	4	10½
	Balance—dead loss	...	£39	12	7½

From this statement, my kind friend, you will see that I am still minus £39 12s. 7½d., and having exhausted the benevolence of my private friends, I was a long time at a loss to discover by what method I should rectify that fearful defalcation. “I have it!” shouted I, as I was one day dining off a dish of pig’s chitterlings: “I have it! I will throw aside my drab, and resume my Anglo-Circassian suit. Instead of elongating my phiz and twisting my mouth into a purse, I will show my teeth, and pucker up my chafts, and snigger and grin. I will cut all hum-drum crotchets: I will ‘laugh and grow fat.’ My public will soon be tickled, laugh likewise, and under that benign guffaw will fork out the tin. My breeches pockets will soon be, ‘without o’erflowing, full.’ I shall not only remedy the deficit of £39 12s. 7½d., but, doubtless, achieve a clear surplus of twenty-pounds.” This brilliant prospect cheers the very cockles of my heart. Oh! aint there a brave time coming? Adieu, for the present, my sweet Scraggs.

Adieu! adieu! Ever thine,

THE ANGLO CIRCASSIAN.

CIRCASSIA AND THE PENINSULA
REVISITED.

P R E F A C E.

THE account I have given of the following journey may be compared to a map, which only indicates the most important points in the country it professes to illustrate. For instance, suppose England to be the country delineated, London, Bristol, York, Liverpool, and a few other towns of equal notoriety, would be alone pointed out. In the following pages, I have only recorded the principal events which befel me. Between the scene of one occurrence and that of another, we may have made a grand leap of two or three hundred miles, leaving the intermediate stages to be filled up by the imagination.

It will be seen that my route lay through Hindostan, Affghanistan, Persia, Georgia, Circassia, and Spain. Now, who is there among my readers but what is as familiarly acquainted with the manners and customs of these countries as of his own? Why, then, should I stop and relate a thrice-told tale? If there is an

exception to the above, it may be made in the case of Circassia, and, consequently, Circassia and its noble people will occupy a prominent place in my sketches. Without farther preamble, we will, therefore, proceed on our flying tour ; and I advise thee, oh, Reader ! unless thy lungs should be very tenacious, to decline the steeple-chase ; for if thou art anyways asthmatic, as sure as fate, all the wind will speedily be bumped out of thy body.

DEDICATION.

MY DEAR SALLY GIBLETTS,

I am much obliged for the fat plaice and packet of jumbles you sent me : both were prime articles indeed. I enjoyed them *con amore* ; and the more so, because I found, from the accompanying note, that in consequence of your brilliant success in the sweet-stuff line, you had enlarged your mercantile engagements, and had added to that profitable speculation the respectable avocation of fishmonger.

The last time I had the delight of seeing you standing at Buckingham Gate, vending sweet-stuff, it seemed to me that the strap which passed over your elegant shoulders, and supported in front your jumble-board, was in a highly dilapidated condition. Why not get it repaired in time ? Suppose it should break, and capsize your stock in trade ? Have you pondered on the horrors of the Queen's Bench ?

I am truly sorry that Samuel Trotter, the muffin-

man round the corner, should diddle you so neatly out of the penny sole. You have, however, this consolation, that all who are engaged in extensive trade speculations are liable to those heavy losses.

Keep up your spirits, therefore, my dear Sally, and as in the fish-vending occupation, good fish and good walking are both essential requisites; attend particularly to your soles. A good occasional standing ground is likewise of great importance; therefore look particularly to your plaice, (place ?) and if you wish to catch a flat, water well your flat fish.

You tell me that Bill Simms has paid you his outstanding debt of two-pence farthing. I am rejoiced at it: honest men are not entirely banished from the world; of this, Bill Simms is a living example. Let me, therefore, again exhort you to get a new jumble-board strap, and believe me ever to remain, dear Sally,

Your sincere well-wisher and friend,

GHERI, THE ANGLO-CIRCISSIAN.

CIRCASSIA AND THE PENINSULA

REVISITED.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY MATTER.

ONE would have thought that the perils and hairbreadth escapes I had encountered in my mad-brained excursions to Circassia and the Peninsula would have deterred me from any future outbreaks of a similar kind, but the deuce a bit did it have that salutary effect upon me. From my earliest boyhood I was fond of anything which had the air of an adventure ; and I firmly believe, that if I had been placed in a lady's *boudoir*, surrounded with all the elegancies and luxuries in the universe, I should have even abandoned it all, including the blue-beseeching eyes of the lily-bosomed owner, for the robber-abounding wood, or the

desert isle of the booming ocean. I was, likewise, ever fond of reading the history of the struggles of oppressed nations; and likewise, whenever it was possible, of mingling in those struggles. Most undoubtedly I missed my destiny when I became a pale-faced, lank-haired priest. My proper position would have been on the well-contested battle-field, amid the rushing of the charging squadrons, the clash of bayonets and sabres, the groans of the dying, and the shouts of victory. Then the Anglo-Circassian would have been in his proper element; then, mayhap, instead of being a melancholic wanderer,—subject to the contumelies of men he cannot but despise, having a paltry pittance doled out to him, as though he was a pauper,—he might have won lasting laurels, and left a name, recorded with honour, in the annals of his country. Now! what is he now? The reflection was madness: it haunted me like a night-mare, and was, eventually, the cause of my eccentric wanderings. These wanderings, however, have not been barren: they introduced me to a Shamyl, a Maria, and, above all, to a Nazeek. It is true, like summer clouds, the last two have vanished from the dædal earth, and will never again bless my aching eyes. Yet the religious,

affectionate fervour of the one, and the lofty, high-souled purity of the other, have chastened my soul from much ruggedness, and moulded to peace and benignity what nothing else on earth could have moulded. Twin angels in heaven, sweet inheritors of eternal bliss, now, even now, you look on me from your fadeless ætherial bower—snow, even now, you pour your benign influence into the inmost core of my heart.


This influence, however salutary, had no effect at all in restraining or curbing my mercurial rambling propensities; on the contrary, constant motion, eternal change of place, was absolutely necessary to my existence, as it alone prevented me from perpetually brooding over the loved ones I had ever lost, from death or inevitable madness. No sooner, therefore, did the glorious Hungarian war of independence commence, and the names of Kossuth, Bem, and Klapka had resounded far and wide, than I at once determined to join their heroic bands. This intention was expressed in a note inserted in the *Sun* newspaper of the 7th August, 1849. I subjoin a copy of that note, as well as of the little poem that accompanied it.

THE HUNGARIAN WAR SONG.

Written by the Rev. W. Wickenden, B.A., who has already served with the unconquerable Circassians, and would, with heart and soul, join any auxiliary force which might be raised among his countrymen, to aid the heroic and noble-minded Hungarians; and though his profession might preclude him from engaging in the actual strife, yet he could administer consolation to the heroes dying on the field of battle, and would do so, and, if necessary, die with them.

CHILDREN of heroes, arouse to the fight,
And scatter your foes to the mansions of night.
Your old deed of glory renew on that plain,
Where your foemen, in myriads, lay battered and slain.
 See Freedom, in his sun-bright car,
 Leads to death or victory.
Glorious is the laurell'd grave
 Of those who for their country die.

Yon dark cloud of smoke, over Buda's scathed brow,
Springs from the villages mouldering below;
And the loved, much-loved spot, where your cottages
 stood,
Is now a charred chaos of fire and of blood!



From ruin dark your country save :
Brothers, swift to victory fly ;
Glorious is the laurell'd grave
Of those who for their country die.

Your consorts are ravished, your children are torn
From the arms of the mother, distracted, forlorn.
And now see the dastards approach to the fight—
Revenge ! shout revenge ! on, on in your might.

Oh, Heaven ! inspire each martial breast ;
Disown that wretch who dares to fly.
Glorious is the laurell'd grave
Of those who for their country die.

The sabres clash wildly, the cannons loud thunder,
And, like a fierce whirlwind, the brave Honveds sunder.
The dark, frowning phalanx of tyrants before ;
They fly in dismay, or roll trampled in gore.

We thank thee, oh ! great King of Heaven !
For this resplendent victory.
Glorious is the laurell'd grave
Of those who for their country die.

In consequence, however, of the unexampled trea-

chery of the miscreant Georgey, the Hungarian war terminated abruptly, and I was obliged, reluctantly, to forego my long-cherished project. With my accustomed restlessness, I, however, soon formed another. Circassia, and the Peninsula was now the will-o'-the-wisp of my unstable imagination. I longed again to see the glorious country of my lost Nazeek ; I longed again to see the noble-minded Shaml, and, once more, to combat side by side with him and his unconquerable heroes ; and in an inferior, but in yet a strong degree, I wished to see the grave of Maria, and the olive-groved, beautiful Spain. Ere, however, I could start on my perilous journey, I had a dreadful trial to encounter, which I shall proceed to unfold in my next chapter. The reader will see, on perusing it, that humour is so mixed up in my idiosyncrasy, that even the almost unbearable tortures I suffered, and the prospect of death itself, could not prevent it from occasionally breaking out.

CHAPTER II.

A SOJOURN IN AN HOSPITAL.

I HAD been for a long time afflicted with pains in the urethra. These pains grew every day more intolerable, and my life grew a burden to me.

My kind old college friend, Dr. Frampton, who at once perceived that my case was a surgical one, introduced me to that eminent surgeon T. B. Curling, Esq., who, after much pains-taking, discovered a stone in my bladder, but in such a position that it was most difficult of detection. After consulting with Dr. Frampton, they advised me to become a patient in the London Hospital, Whitechapel, as the best, perhaps the only, means of getting rid of my troublesome companion.

Now stone in the bladder was an hereditary complaint in my family, and I had lost two uncles by it. I, therefore, fully expected it would prove fatal to me ; so I arranged all my affairs, made my will, and appointed my friend, Dr. Stebbing, my executor. Yet, so calm

and easy was all this done, that no person could discover that anything more than the ordinary routine of my quiet mode of life was going forward.

At length the 27th of February, 1850, dawned gloomily, the day on which I was to enter the hospital, my anticipated tomb. I arose, made a hearty breakfast, made up a change of linen, and a few other necessaries, in a brown paper parcel, and started off alone, and on foot, carrying my parcel in my hand.

On my way a circumstance occurred which had a cheering effect on my mind. A little beyond King's Cross, on the right-hand side of the Gray's Inn Road, an old Irishman has, for many years, kept a little apple-stall. His whereabouts may easily be detected, because his stall is situated immediately over a sewer-grating, and his nose consequently regaled, for at least eight hours every day, with the odoriferous incense issuing therefrom. The eccentricity of this old Irishman, in fixing his position in such a singular locality, had often attracted my notice ; and I had, on previous occasions, entered into conversation with him. I did so on the present occasion, and told him whither I was bound. " Arrah !" said he, " it is a sthone case you are afther ; and, by St. Pathrick, but I have had a

big sthone myself, and they cut it out in a jiffey ; and, whack ! ullaloo ! here I stand on dry ground (he was, in fact, sitting in a puddle), sound as Dennis Regan, the flower of Tipperary. A sthone, sir : a sthone is—whew !” and here he vended a long, low ejaculatory whistle.

I passed on from the old Irishman with a brighter spirit. “Surely,” said I to myself, “if that old dilapidated specimen of humanity can pass through such a desperate operation, and afterwards make so lightly of it, the Anglo-Circassian, who thought lightly of scaling the tremendous crags of the Caucasus, charging Russian squares, carrying batteries by storm, braving tigers, rescuing Spanish maidens from banditti, &c., &c., &c., must be turned maudlin to care for a despicable stone operation.”

On I consequently wended my broad visage, sometimes almost relaxing into a broad grin, as I saw some eccentric frolic perpetrated in the streets. On arriving at the Royal Exchange, I sat down on one of the side seats ; and lo ! on the same seat sat a very pretty smiling, black-eyed girl. The stone operation, the Hospital, and all its gloomy anticipations vanished like summer clouds before the engaging smile and

winning manners of that bewitching girl. I entered into a regular flirtation with her, and when she left me I made a positive engagement to meet her on the same spot on the morrow, at twelve o'clock.

She passed away like a sunbeam, and I again resumed my journey; and ere long the lofty brick walls of the Hospital loomed in the foggy atmosphere before me. If those walls could speak, how many tales of woe would they unfold! Blighted affections, buds of promise nipped untimely, severed ties, and broken hearts: on the other hand, what deeds of benevolence could they not record, what glorious deeds of mercy could they not reveal to the admiring view.

I passed within the portal, ascended the steps, and was ushered into a small room on the right-hand side. Several maimed personages were seated there, groaning and deploring their respective maladies. Suddenly, a terrific scream made the whole room re-echo. A youthful Galen had just extracted a grinder from a middle-aged woman, and it was she who had made the confounded clamour which had aroused the echoes of the place.

Again I felt a deep gloom cloud my spirit. The groans, screams, and lugubrious expression on the

countenances of all around me had a contagious influence, and infected even me. I again felt low-spirited, and this was not alleviated when one of the female attendants desired me to follow her to the ward appointed for my reception. We ascended two flights of stairs, passed through a small lobby, and I was ushered into the Gore Ward of the Talbot division of the hospital. Along each wall of this ward were arranged small narrow beds, on which reclined patients afflicted with a variety of complaints: some pale as death, others with countenances flushed and distorted with pain. My own bed was assigned by the nurse of the ward: my ticket, announcing that I was admitted an extra case under Mr. Curling, was suspended at the foot of it, and over that a board with my name, occupation, age, and case written on it; then were fastened on two cards, one of which had marked on it in blood-red letters, "extra case for the preservation of life, under Mr. Curling;" the other "full diet." My nurse then ordered me to bed, and I soon undressed and turned in.

Behold then the Bard of the Forest, he, who had throughout his whole life courted the streams, woods, and free breezes of heaven; he, whom Europe and

Asia, and I may say the whole world, was not too large to contain ; behold him now, cooped up as it were in a narrow prison-house, breathing an atmosphere impregnated with anything rather than the odour of violets and roses, surrounded by objects quite different to the glorious dawn on the sublime range of the Caucasus, or the stately trees of my own native forest, gently rocking to and fro. Vainly did I turn hither and thither and try to compose myself to sleep. I could not sleep, I could not even rest. The day and the following night passed away, and I was still sleepless. The sonorous hospital clock announced the hour of mid-day ; I started at the sound ; it was the very hour I had promised to meet the pretty black-eyed girl at the Royal Exchange. I then felt still more acutely my state of durance ; I sighed deeply, and turned me to the wall.

Between the hours of one and two the tinkling of a small bell caused a deep commotion in the ward. Those patients who were up and dressed hurriedly threw off their clothes and plunged into bed ; and the nurses flew hither and thither and prepared basins of water, towels, &c., &c., and the ward-nurse joined the troop, bearing in her hand a basket containing

sundry ominous articles, among which conspicuously shone a blood-red cloth. A desperate trampling at the door of the ward now drew my attention, and on casting my eyes in that direction I perceived "my doctor" (the ward phrase) enter, followed by a troop of youthful Galens. On they marched, the countenances of many of the patients turning as pale as death as they strode forward, and many of them trembled. The scene was to me so new and strange, that I endeavoured subsequently to embody my impressions in the following lines :—

THE WARD INVASION.

THE ward bell now is ringing, I tremblingly declare,
Your towels and your basins, ye nurses, swift prepare,
For patients' blood must freely flow this unpropitious
day ;
And a troop of Galens pour along the ward in firm
array.

Now ramp and stamp, and trample, they rattle on amain,
Like a fierce troop of Cossacs careering o'er the plain ;
And Mr. C——, the leader, with aspect bold and free
Waves on his gallant heroes to death or victory.

The centre of the advancing host compactly move along
Like Macedonian phalanx—a close embattled throng,
The beadle and the nurses, like light troops hover round,
Creeping and gliding here and there with a still and
cat-like sound.

But when the patients see that man,—the beadle, sirs,
I mean,—
They tremble, wild and lowly crouch the shaking
sheets between ;
For like a stern magician, a wondrous box he carries,
Which bone and sinew grinds amain, and quivering
midriff harries.

Now on they go, and every couch successively surround,
And every form recumbent gives forth a wailing sound.
And Irish Jack in accents wild, calls on his only
brother,
And Dido Bill, in hollow tones, invokes his absent
mother.

Ah ! Jemmy White, policeman, I'd have you now
take care,
For now the troop with hostile front are moving to
your lair.

You have a lumber abscess ; you are a lumbering fellow,
And now your pale face turns amain all blue and
red, now yellow.

The deuce a bit the Galens heed these changes and
these cries,

But cut away, and probe away, with glistening eager
eyes.


And now their task is ended, at least for this fine day,
Like black-robed necromancers, they swiftly glide away.

There was one thing connected with these visiting days which I must confess rather surprised me. No sooner had the medical phalanx disappeared, than a universal light-heartedness pervaded the patients, and jokes, and sometimes laughter, resounded throughout the ward. The most ridiculous trifles would cause a universal laugh ; and grown-up men engaged in things which would have been deemed puerile even in babies. I have seen a man six foot high and forty years of age play with his dolly, (a string to which is attached a piece of wood about six inches in length, suspended from the top of the bedstead for the patient to lay hold of when he sits up,) by swinging it to and

fro for an hour at a time : medical men may account for this, but I confess I cannot.

My medical friend determined in my case to adopt crushing as the best method in ridding me of my troublesome companion ; and, ere it was accomplished, I had to undergo nine operations exquisitely painful. I wonder how I got through it, but I did with the most dogged resolution, and never from first to last uttered a single groan. In this respect I proved myself a complete stoic, and I here candidly confess that I am an enthusiastic admirer of the stoic school of philosophy.

In the London Hospital there is a theatre for surgical operations, with seats arranged amphitheatrically for the medical students. It is a neat little theatre, and I have reason ever to remember, as it was here my troublesome calculus was crushed. I say troublesome, for my case was peculiarly troublesome, and I hereby declare, and declare from my heart, that I do not believe any other man than Mr. Curling would have successfully treated it : I think, and ever shall think, that it was solely owing to his indomitable perseverance and artistic skill that I am at present alive to write these lines.



Here I beg leave to add some verses which I composed on

OPERATING DAY.

AROUSE, my merry cripples, and dance a fairy round,
And make with heel and timber-toe the boarded floor
resound.

This is the operating day ! ye tainted coves, beware,
For doctors wave, like pennons bold, their lancets in
the air.

From thee, Tom Grimes, that hernia so beauteous
must be torn,*


That loss so irreparable, thou surely must aye mourn.
And Dicky Spriggs, thy wither'd leg with sores en-
laced so rare O !

Lopped off will be with grinding smart, making thy
ox-eyes stare O !

Ah ! ah ! Bob Dunn, you grin away and think your-
self secure :

Stop, stop a bit, my winsome lad, make not thyself
too sure,

• I once heard a medical gentleman, an enthusiast in his
profession, expatiating with much gusto on the beauties of
a hernia.



Your doctor, Mr. C——, I heard whisper in accents
low,

“ This arm, up to the elbow, assuredly must go ! ”

Tom Grimes, Bob Dunn, and Dicky Spriggs, hear ye
the doctor's bell ?

Floating so dismal on the breeze, just like a funeral
knell ;

And Mr. C—— is just arrived with lancet burnished
bright :

Your toes and fingers twist about, your hair starts
up with fright !

Now down unto the theatre you're borne in sad con-
dition,

Wishing yourselves ten miles away from “ that ere ”
exhibition.

The youthful Galens sit in rows in pit and gallery,
Making no bones of broken bones, but smirk all jeer-
ingly.

My conscience ! Master Tommy Grimes, that was a
gallant roar,

Reverbing to the ceiling, and rattling round the floor.

And Bobby Dunn and Dicky Spriggs, oh ! what a
spang and gasp
You gave as through the marrow the shining saw did
rasp.

Now, Mr. Bard ! your turn is come, I solemnly declare ;
Your head is down, your heels are up high in the
murky air ;
They slash away right willingly, but still they wonder-
ing saw
The Forest Bard's broad Saxon face smile with a
steady jaw.

Then rouse, my merry cripples, and dance a fairy round,
And make with heel and timber-toe the boarded floor
resound.
This is the operating day ! ye tainted coves, beware,
For doctors wave, like pennons bold, their lancets in
the air.

Ladies and gentlemen of England, Wales, Scotland,
Ireland, Berwick-on-Tweed, and eke the Colonies,
"lend me your ears." Here was a poor devil lying
on the bed of sickness, with Death staring him full in

the face, surrounded with gasps, cries, and groans, yet who had the taint of humour so engraved in the very core of his heart, that even under such trying circumstances as those recorded, he could pour forth such effusions as the "Ward-Invasion," and "Operating Day;" verily, Bard of the Forest, thou *art* a "queer fellow."

There were times, however, when I longed for the fresh breezes of heaven, even as a child longs for its absent mother. Tossing on the bed of sickness and agony, my native village and forest, with all their lovely accessories, would rise to my memory, and my eyes would fill with tears. It was on one of these desponding occasions that I composed the following

LINES WRITTEN IN SICKNESS.

Slow breaks the dawn on my sad prison-house,
Lighting me to a world of grief and woe;
Stretched on the uneasy bed of pain I lie;
No heavenly breezes fan my fever'd cheek,
Bringing sweet healing on their balmy wings.
The spring beams round me with her silken web
Of fairy beauty, spread o'er hill and vale;
The cowslip from its velvet couch peeps forth,

The scented violet from its emerald bed,
The hawthorn showers around its snowy blossoms,
The linnet sweetly chants her oaten reed,
The blackbird pipes his lay when balmy eve
Steeps the whole world in one sweet robe of beauty ;
The streams in music glide all swift along ;
The waving woods, with deep mysterious voice,
Sing the wild hymn of mystic solitude :
But not for me the birds, the streams, the woods,
Pour forth their bursts of heaven-steeped melody.
The groans of pain break thrilling on mine ear,
The throbs of woe burst from my quivering heart.
Oh, woods ! oh, streams ! when, when shall I behold ye ?
When taste again your soft ætherial sweets ?
When fuse my soul in your soft melodies ?—
The morn is fair without, the sun, with mellow rays,
Peeps through the window panes, all sweetly smiling.
I hear the notes of the careering birds.
On such a morn as this, long years ago,
I wander'd on the banks of winding Severn ;
Her gentle waves broke softly at my feet,
Which the soft breeze kissed into dimpling smiles ;
The thrush sweet carolled in the yellow broom,
And the light skiffs stole gently o'er the waters.

Why, why return, ye sad remembrance ?
It is to thrill my heart with ten-fold woe :
To plunge, still keener, thorns into my heart collapsing.
Oh, memory ! play not such heedless freaks ;
Leave me alone in my sad wretchedness ;
Let me, oh ! let me lie and die in peace.

Such were the fluctuations of my mind during my long and grievous sickness, alternately joyous and hopeful, low-spirited and despairing. But I must here record that I received nothing but kindness and attention from the authorities of that noble institution in which I was a casual sojourner. The skill and kindness of the eminent medical men, and the ceaseless attention of all, will ever, as they deserve to, be remembered with the deepest gratitude; and when I left the hospital a cured man, I left it rather with grief than joy, on account of parting with so many familiar faces and tried friends.


CHAPTER III.

A VISIT TO TOM GIBLETTS.

WHO among my readers are there who remember not the kind-hearted Tom Giblets? He who gave me shelter and food when the rich and the powerful passed by on the other side. My heart would not allow me to leave, perhaps for ever, my native country, without paying a visit to my old friend, perhaps the only friend that fate had left me. On a fine summer morning I therefore proceeded to Palmer's Village, passed the spot where I received the knock-down blow and was robbed of my all, and soon found myself before the welcome door of my friend. I knocked loudly, and soon Sally Giblets, formerly Goggles, opened the door with the air of a startled fawn. "What be'est a kicking up that larum for?" said she; "why, thoul't knock in the door-panel;—but good gracious me! Lord bless us! who'd ha' thought it! it is He, sure enough!" Here she turned round short upon me, and

ran into the house. "Tom, Tom ! come here, Giblets : here be the Anglar-Cassian : come, Tom, come." "Thou be'est a dreaming, Sal," growled Tom : "the Anglar-Cassian is as dead as a door-nail." "It is him, or his ghost, at all ewents," said Sally ; and as she uttered these words I entered the room. "Dang it !" shouted Tom, dashing on the ground a basin of Irish stew, with which he was regaling himself, "it is him, sure enough." Here he rushed forward, and, grasping my right hand, worked it up and down like a pump-handle, and Sally did the same feat by my left hand ; and there they kept pumping away till I really thought my shoulders were dislocated. "Well, who'd ha' thought it ?" said Tom, when the pumping operation was finished : "maricles will never cease. Sally, run over to the Cat and Bagpipes, and get a pot of porter." "A pot of porter, indeed !" exclaimed Sally, with an air of infinite disdain : "a pot of porter, indeed ! a gallon of Meux's double stout, rayther." "Bring a hogshead, if thou likes," said Tom. And off started Sally with the alacrity of a four-year-old.

I now took a survey of my friend's apartment ; and I must here state that things were much improved, and bore the evident impress of the handy-work of benign



woman. The copper tea-kettle on the well-blackened hob, the neat wire-woven fender, the fire-irons, and the trivet, all shone brightly ; the floor was well cleaned, and the chairs, and, above all, the old deal table on which I partook of my first meal with Giblets, was as white as the driven snow.

Sally now returned with a large brown pitcher of double stout, unslung the gridiron, and placed upon it some delicious-looking, streaky rump-steaks. She then spread a neat, as well as clean, table-cloth on the table, arranged the knives and forks, and placed in the centre a pewter pot. " 'Scuse glasses, sir," said Sally ; " but old Tom there says that porter and stout drinks best out of pewter, ha ! ha ! ha ! Old Tom's a deep cove : a glass is a tell-tale, but he can take an extra gulp, without a body knowing it, out of a pewter. Ha ! ha ! ha !"

Here Tom arose and gave Sally a good-natured slap and a buss at the same time. " Never mind her," said Giblets, " the old girl is a rum-un to go at times, but she's sound, sir. A rum cove, it is true, but upright and down-straight. But the steaks and the stout be ready ; fire away, sir ; stick in your fork, sir ; slash away with your knife, sir ; my name is Tom Giblets,—Giblets at your service."

Here we set to ; and I must do Sally the justice of saying, that the beef-steaks were luscious, well done, and juicy, and would have done justice even to a Soyer. We talked very little during our meal, but pounded away as though contending for a wager. Neither did Meux's double stout escape our ardent embraces. Again and again did the pewter circulate; and I strongly suspect that Sally's inuendo about the extra gulp had some degree of foundation, for Master Giblets took a long and earnest gaze at the ceiling when his turn came to embrace the pewter.

At length our meal was concluded, and all things cleared away, except the earthen jar and the shining pewter, which still performed its mystic rounds. I had lately heard a kind of whining and rustling proceed from a nondescript piece of furniture, an evident cross between a basket and a box. Sally and Tom gazed fondly at the box, and, presently, a little curly-headed urchin lifted up its countenance, and said, " Mammy, mammy, Derry told." " It is our first kid," said Giblets; " bless his little heart." Sally now started up, took the babe from its lair, and devoured it with kisses. The little fellow, who had the fresh-coloured cheeks of its mother,

and black eyes of its father, now stretched out its hands towards Giblets with a tiny spring and an exultant, crowing sound; but, no sooner did he see me, than he shrunk back dismayed, and hid his cherub countenance in his mother's bosom.

"I am very much deprived," said Giblets, "that the kid should be afraid of his namesake." Here Sally arose quickly and put her hand before the mouth of her husband. There was evidently some mystery here. A long struggle now took place between the pair. At length Tom removed the fair hand of his better half, and thus spoke: "I say I am very much deprived how the kid should be afraid of his namesake, for you be, sir, his namesake, and it was my old woman's doings." Here another struggle took place, to the advantage, eventually, of Tom, who at length gasped out, "it was my old woman's doings, the kid was christened Gherei (which Sally pronounced Jerry) Goggles Giblets."

Here Gherei Goggles Giblets looked up from his maternal hiding-place, and stretched forth his hands towards me. I took him in my arms, and he fondly returned my kisses, crowing and cooing all the time. Soon, however, he returned to his mother,

who, baring her bosom, gave him suck, and thus presented to my view one of the most pleasing objects in nature, a mother suckling her child : and I must do Sally the justice to say that no queen or duchess in the world had a fairer or whiter bosom ; and a thousand curses light on the wretch in whose mind the beautiful exhibition before me could excite any other emotions than those of unsullied admiration and the holiest purity.

There, then, we sat, Sally embracing Gherei Goggles Giblets, and Tom and myself embracing, alternately, the pewter ; and, amid these different occupations, the following dialogue took place :—

“ I am quite deprived, sir,” said Tom Giblets, “ that your haristocratic pals should low you to go into the ospittle. Why some on em have a thousand a year.”

“ Twenty thousand,” said I.

“ The bigger shame,” said Giblets. “ Why we costermongers, who arn by hard work only a shilling, or, may be, two a day, would have been ashamed of lowing such a thing to a brother cove : we would have clubbed our pence and our sixpences together, and would have got a doctor. He should not have been a burden on a ospittle ; no, no, do not think it.”

"Aristocrats and costermongers look differently on similar things."

"I know that," said Tom; "and the look is not halways to the davantage of the harrystocracy. But what think you yourself of the matter?"

"Why, if it had not been for that noble institution, the London Hospital, and its benevolent officials and directors, I must have perished."

"And your pals, with their overgrown incomes, would have lowed that?"

"Thou hast said it."

Here Mrs. Giblets, who was evidently uneasy at the turn the conversation had taken, designedly put an end to it by lifting up her voice, and singing in a well-modulated and sweet tone, "there is a brave time coming."

"What d'ye think of Sally, now?" said the gratified Giblets; "isn't she a good un? isn't she a very degaging woman?"

"Yes," said I; "but I often think how near your marriage was set aside by that wretched Bob Cater, and his cab knocking off the wheel of the truck."

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared Tom, and "ha! ha! ha!" roared Sally.

"We have given up the truck," said Tom, with a consequential air, "and I have bought a donkey and a cart, and opened a coal-shed. Sally has given over wending jumbles."

I was rejoiced to my very heart at the improved prospects of the good and worthy couple before me, and by this time, the jar of stout being exhausted, I arose to depart.

"And when shall I see you again?" said Mr. and Mrs. Giblets both together.

"Alas! my good friends, I cannot tell you, as I am bound to Circassia."

Both stood gazing upon me utterly astounded. At length Tom spoke as follows: "Sir, you are bound to Cassia, and I'll be bound it is all owing to them ere harrystocracy and the ospittle affair: never allow them ere dung-mixen coves to drive you abroad; but praps you are in want of grub and lush, if so, speak out, bear a hand: if so, you are welcome to a year's board and lodging scot free,—isn't he, Sally?"

"Sartainly," said Sally, "and another year into the bargain."

Here both arose. Tom laid hold of my right hand Sally of my left, and both again and again urged me

to remain. I had, however, pre-determined otherwise, and with a heavy heart I took leave of my kind-hearted friends. When I got a short distance from their humble abode I looked back to take a last look. Giblets was standing, leaning, pale and agitated, against the lintel of the door; and Sally was gazing on her little boy, on whose rosy countenance the tears of his mother heavily plashed. A tear stood in mine own eye as I turned the corner, and saw them no more.

CHAPTER IV.

MY FRIEND THE RUSSIAN CAPTAIN.

I HAD lately felt much uneasiness with respect to my friend the Russian captain. His letters to me for the last year, instead of being light and buoyant, had assumed a heavy and lugubrious aspect. I could not account for this change in any way satisfactory to myself. His voyages had not been unprosperous, in fact quite the reverse ; his owners had not become bankrupts ; his ship had not sprung a leak. Yet nevertheless, he was continually pooh-pooing and croaking. At length, the following passage in his last letter to me, in some degree, accounted for his extraordinary conduct. " I hope we shall see you at the " King of Prussia," Deptford, next Monday. My consort, though often pitching and yawing about like a trekskuyt in a stiff north-wester, will, I trust, clap a stopper on her gab when you cast anchor." This passage, although enigmatical enough in all conscience,

yet gave me sufficient verge to conclude that my friend had entered into the holy (qy.) state of matrimony, and likewise that that state proved unsatisfactory to him ; nor did I at all wonder at this, the marriages of sailors generally proving so. Jack, after a long voyage, when he has seen nothing in the shape of a woman save a pink-eyed Albino, a grease-bedizened Hottentot, or, mayhap, a stray mermaid with fishy countenance and slimy green hair, looks with a most complacent eye upon the first " shipshape female craft " he chances to fall in with, instantly takes her in tow, gets a few glasses of grog aboard, under the influence of which he decorates his companion with graces transcending the Medicean Venus, and incontinently goes to a priest, gets spliced, and, when he returns to a state of consciousness, finds himself saddled with a frowsy harridan for life.

I found afterwards that something of this nature had happened to my friend the Russian captain. There is a little villa, called Vanderdeken Villa, situated near the quay at the far-famed city of Amsterdam. This villa was inhabited by Mrs. Vanderdeken, the widow of a Burgomaster who had been of some note in his native city. The villa was a neat little con-

cern enough, and boasted of a summer-house, situated, as is usual with Dutch summer-houses, over a stagnant ditch, picturesquely covered with green sludge and cheered with the continual music of frogs, newts, and toads. Mrs. Vanderdeken kept a species of what is called in London an "eating-house," although I never knew an house of that kind swallow anything, though doubtless its frequenters bolt much, especially small-poxed beef and knackers'-yard abominations. Now Mrs. Vanderdeken's establishment was famous for its puissant salamagundie: my friend, the Russian captain, was fond of salamagundie, and he, consequently, was in the habit, whenever his ship touched at Amsterdam, of calling at Mrs. Vanderdeken's, and partaking copiously of the above-mentioned heteorogeneous fare. The consequence was, that a great intimacy sprung up between these two worthies.


Now it chanced that owing to one of my friend's remittances being accidentally missent, he had been obliged to run up a slight score at Mrs. Vanderdeken's. He had subsequently sailed to Circassia and back again, the remittance pertinaceously, though vainly chasing him from port to port. On arriving at Amsterdam, my friend (after partaking copiously of

double grog with a brother skipper ; this must be particularly attended to, in order to account for what followed) hastened to Mrs. Vanderdeken's and ordered his accustomed modicum of salamagundie. Now while Mrs. Vanderdeken was preparing the delicious stew, my friend the Russian captain surveyed her over and over again with love-seeking eyes. Recollect, courteous and gentle reader, she was the first female he had seen for six long months, and he was under the influence of fifteen tumblers of double grog. He gazed and gazed again, and at every gaze she became more lovely and more amiable in his eyes, and by the time she had cooked the salamagundie his heart was irrecoverably gone. His pockets were likewise a vacuum, and he was in the horrible dilemma of being deeply in love and deeply in debt at one and the same time. How could he extricate himself from such a desperate fix ? Only one way presented itself to the obfuscated faculties of my friend, and that was by offering marriage to Mrs. Vanderdeken.

So Mrs. Vanderdeken placed the smoking, tempting salamagundie before my friend. He, however, regarded it not, his eyes were fixed on Mrs. Vanderdeken. He attempted to swallow a spoonful, it would

not do, his eyes were still fixed on Mrs. Vanderdeken. "Bring yourself to an anchor," said my friend at length, and Mrs. Vanderdeken sat down, nothing loth, on his knee. It was now evidently all over with my friend, he was in the bilboes for life. "Are you spliced?" demanded my friend, with a hug. "Naw, mynheer," replied Mrs. Vanderdeken, with another. "Will you be spliced?" said my friend, with a desperate kiss. "Yaw, mynheer," said Mrs. Vanderdeken, with another, more desperate. It was done—it was all over. Before the fumes of the grog had evaporated from my friend's brain, Mrs. Vanderdeken had carried him off triumphantly to the priest, and he had become a married and ruined man.

When I entered the well-known cabin of my friend, he met me with a downcast look and leaden countenance. His visage was so ludicrously elongated, that I had some difficulty in restraining my laughter. The late Mrs. Vanderdeken evidently hung a heavy weight upon him, an absolute millstone about his neck. A millstone! fore-george! rather a granite mountain! Her cheeks were two round fiery hemispheres, and her chin rolled down an absolute ocean of blubber, even to her prodigiously prominent bust. It would take



the cable of a second-rate frigate to clasp the immense rotundity of her waist; and her bustle was a Pelion piled on an Ossus. "Here is my old shipmate, the Anglo-Circassian," said my friend, introducing me to this alps of flesh and blubber. The alps slowly slewed round her head, gazed upon me with her lack-lustre eyes, gave a snort and a grunt, closed her eyes, and resumed her original position.

"I congratulate you on your happy marriage," said I.

"Avast heaving," replied my friend aside, and pointing to his consort: "a regular Algerine corsair, all cat-head jaw and willy-wawing." Here the late Mrs. Vanderdeken gave evident signs of consciousness, and my friend, with a look of ludicrous despair, left the cabin.

I have, oh, courteous and gentle reader! been so fascinated with the rotund graces of my friend's magnificent consort, that I have omitted to inform thee that my friend was bound for the East Indies, and that I had determined to accompany him, and penetrate into Circassia *viâ* Afghanistan, Persia, and Georgia. Our voyage was rapid and prosperous, and only two incidents occurred which deserves notice in this veritable history.

We encountered some heavy gales before we cleared the English Channel, and the ship was so tumbled and tossed about that my friend the Russian captain, for reasons best known to himself, instead of sleeping in their regular berth, had two hammocks slung for the separate repose of himself and consort. About the middle of a tempestuous night we were startled by a terrific crash, which shook the whole ship from stem to stern. The man at the wheel thought she had struck on a sunken rock, and all hands were piped on deck. It was, however, soon ascertained that all was right in that respect; and conjecture was again busy as to the cause of the late prodigious thud. At length a succession of heavy twenty-four pounder groans was heard to proceed from the after-cabin, and on proceeding in that direction it was ascertained that a heavy lurch of the ship had broke asunder the lashing cords of the late Mrs. Vanderdeken's hammock, and that that ponderous female had foundered stern foremost, knocking a prodigious hole through the boarding of the cabin floor; "and it was only through the mercy of Saint Peter," quoth my friend, "that she did not knock a hole through the copper sheathing of the bottom."

The other incident was this:—It chanced that I had been very officious in extricating the late Mrs. Vanderdeken from her perilous position, when fast in the hole she had pounded in the ship's bottom, and from that moment I fancied she eyed me in a more favourable manner. She also seemed as though she had some important proposition to make to me; and oftentimes she loosened the lanyards of her lower jaw, as though about to address me, but the exertion always appeared too much for her, and she quickly relapsed into her accustomed quiescent torpidity. What the deuce does she want? What important proposition has she to make that requires such prodigious handling? Is she in love with me? and is she about to take advantage of leap-year and to tell me so? All these questions I put to myself mentally, but could not give a solution to either satisfactory to myself. At length, one day, after swallowing an extra tumbler of double grog, she again fixed her eyes steadily upon me, and her jaws gradually opened. "It will do now," said I; "I shall soon be in possession of the great secret." Gradually her jaw opened, she gave a preparatory grunt, and then a loud snort,

and then came the long-expected proposition. "Would you like a bason of salamagundie, mynheer?" I burst into a loud laugh; and my friend the Russian captain, horror-struck, precipitately left the apartment.

CHAPTER V.

MY ARRIVAL IN INDIA.

Nothing else particular happened during our voyage, which was rapid and prosperous, and on a beautiful sunny morning we landed on the magnificent quay of that city of palaces, Calcutta, a city which combines all the splendour and gorgeousness of eastern with the classic elegance of European architecture.

This magnificent city has been so often described, that I shall not dilate on a theme so hackneyed and worn out. During my voyage out, I had resolved to penetrate into Circassia, *vid* Afghanistan, Persia, and Georgia; and, after bidding my friend the Russian captain an affectionate farewell, I commenced that truly stupendous journey on foot. That route has, however, been so oftener described, that I shall not worry my reader by entering into minute particulars of what I saw and heard. I shall merely relate a few personal adventures which befel me, and which were certainly strange and singular enough.


Before, however, relating those adventures, I wish to make a few observations on the probable success of a Russian invasion of India. I passed up the precise route their army would have to take if they made such an attempt. I took particular notice of that route ; and I can venture positively to assert that it is totally impracticable for a large army ; and if India is ever successfully invaded, it must be by a large army. We will even suppose Persia in alliance with Russia, a thing very unlikely to happen, still they would have to penetrate through the tortuous defiles and barren hills of Affghanistan, where they would find no stores or provisions ; and how could they get those stores and provisions, so far distant as they would be from their base of operations ? They would also, most assuredly, have to withstand the fierce assaults of numerous and infuriated tribes of hardy warriors, who, like their Scythian ancestors, would make an unexpected assault in front to-day, and a still more unexpected charge in flank or rear to-morrow. Worn out and decimated by all these disastrous and concurrent causes, a small band of disorganized and half-starved men would emerge from the terrific Kyber pass, totter on to the Indian frontier, and there they would meet with one

of the finest armies in the world, led on by a Gough or a Napier. A battle would then be fought, the victors of Sobraon and Goojerat would cut through the paralysed Muscovite battalions like thunderbolts : the whole disorganized mass would either be cut in pieces, or taken captive, with the exception of some solitary serf, who would bear the disastrous intelligence to his tyrannic despotic Czar, and, for his pains, would get himself sent on a life journey to the wilds of Siberia.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BANIAN-TREE AND GANGES.

FROM my earliest years I was fond of reading and speculating upon the literature and religion of the Hindoos ; and I was ever dreaming of the majestic Ganges, and the peaceful arcades of the banian-tree, the musing Brahmin and his holy sequestered life of peace and seclusion. There was poetry and romance in every thought that hovered round these beautiful elysian retreats. How often, in my boyish days, have I wished myself a white-robed Brahmin ; how often, in imagination, have I been seated beneath the umbrageous shadow of the most picturesque of all trees, by the soft, rippling waters of the most poetic of all rivers. This cherished feeling grew with my growth, and strengthened with my years ; and it was owing to this circumstance that, in my third excursion to Circassia, I chose the somewhat circuitous route of Hindoostan. In fact, there are several opinions held by



the Hindoo which coincide with my own, among which I may reckon repudiation of animal food, and a limited belief in the transmigration of souls into other bodies after apparent death. I was, likewise, ever fond of musing in the solitude of the music-breathing wood, or wandering on the pebbled margin of the murmuring river. No description which I can give would give an accurate idea of the delight and ecstasy which I felt on finding myself, one lovely sunny morning, under the cooling arcades of my favourite banian-tree, with the majestic Ganges sparkling in the sunbeams, and gliding gracefully before me.

I passed rapidly onward, threw myself on my knees before the sacred stream, and dashed some of its pellucid waters on my forehead. "Holy river!" exclaimed I, in my enthusiasm, "the object even of adoration to myriads of the human race, long before the records of time, at length I gaze on thy placid bosom, at length thy rippling waves glide smiling at my feet, at length thy odoriferous breezes fan my glowing cheek : sweet river ! pearl of the world ! all hail ! all hail !"

And then I wandered on the sunny margin of the rippling waters, and gazed over the broad, glassy bosom of the river queen. I could never gaze enough.

The sun was declining in the far west, and her beams, falling aslant, converted the gently rolling waves into ridges of glittering pearls. Anon a ship, with her snowy sails unbent, would glide majestically by, and the voice of ravishing music would resound from the crowded deck, rendered more sweet by distance.

I turned reluctantly from the majestic Ganges, and passed under the long cathedral aisles of the banian-tree. A mellow, solemn, holy light filled the green recesses of the magnificent grove, (for it was a grove in itself,) and the voice of nature alone broke the majestic silence. It was a seclusion perfectly adapted in all its beauty and all its silent music to calm and holy meditation ; and as I strolled musingly along its emerald arcades, sprinkled with gorgeous flowers, my mind mingled imperceptibly and became imbued and interfused with the universal spirit ; and I became a part, as it were, of the holiness and music which glowed and breathed around. My boyish day-dreams again arose vividly to my memory : those dreams which often transported me to the banks of the soft-flowing Ganges : those dreams amid whose teeming fancies I had, thousands of times, wished and prayed that it might be my lot in after life to become a

peaceful Brahmin, and to muse for ever in the sacred groves of the peaceful, innocent Hindoo. Here, then, I was at last ; and I wandered to and fro, bathing my whole soul in the entrancing solitude. Kings, emperors, kingdoms, and empires, and all their gorgeous trappings diminished and shrunk to tiny spots, mere imperfections on the disc of nature. I still wandered and wandered, and the sun sunk below the horizon, and her cloud palace dissolved in air ; and then arose the bright sparkling moon, and the spirit of solitude became imbued with a tinge deeper and deeper still, and I threw myself down on the grassy flower-covered sward. The night air gently moved the bright leaves of the banian-tree, which shone a gorgeous canopy above me : the holy joy was too much for me, and I burst into tears.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME REMARKS ON INDIA, AND AN INCIDENT.

It was with a reluctant heart that I tore myself from the majestic Ganges and its beautiful banian-tree, and directed my course towards the frontiers of Afghanistan.

The decisive battle of Goojerat had just been fought, and the Affghans and Sikhs driven tumultuously across the frontiers of the Punjaub. The country was still in a very unsettled state, and many Sikh bands, cut off from the main body, traversed the country. It fell to my lot to see many captive bands of that redoubtable people, and I could not help admiring their stalwart frames, and the still fierce look of defiance which glared from their eyes beneath their black bushy corrugated eyebrows. They were indeed worthy opponents; and, with the exception of the Circassians, I had seen no nation in the east at all comparable to them. From admiring this hardy, I

may say heroic, people, I was led to reflect on the might and power of their conquerors, and it is only among the wide-spreading plains and verdure-covered hills of India that that might and power can be properly appreciated. The boundless savannahs, the truly imperial cities, the magnificent rivers, each a sea in itself, the majestic ocean rolling around, studded with innumerable sails, fill the mind with wonder and admiration ; all attesting, in a voice of thunder, the might and power of the Ocean Queen.

Nothing particular happened to me till I arrived in the famous Kyber Pass, and here I could not but admire the hardy, indomitable spirit of my fellow-countrymen, who could, under any circumstances, venture to force it, defended as it was by a host of fierce and hardy warriors. Even to me individually, unopposed, and proceeding at my leisure, it was difficult enough ; but to a whole host of men stretched out in a long, slender line, encumbered with horses, baggage, and the munitions of war, with an unseen enemy thundering upon them in front, flank, and rear, those difficulties were increased ten-fold. Often was this long attenuated line of advancing warriors cut in two by the enterprising Affghans at some point where

the advance could only be maintained in single file, the lofty craggy cliffs on each hand towering to an inconceivable height, their summits mingling with the pure azure of the heavens, and vomiting forth, from every accessible point, showers of shot and missiles of every description. Then would the nimble-footed Goorkas, and no less nimble-footed but more ponderous Highlanders, scale the crags and cliffs to the right and left of the line of march, hunt and drive out the insidious enemy from their sly, rock-hidden ambuscade; and then would the face of the cliffs re-echo with the roar of the musketry, and minute jets of flame and rolling volumes of smoke would burst forth, and, spreading abroad on the ambient air, obscure the striving combatants; and often would a stalwart warrior tumble headlong from the dizzy height, his head cleft asunder by the fear-dealing sword, or his heart pierced by the no less fear-dealing bullet. Still, however, the noble Anglo-Indian army rolled onwards, overcame all obstacles, and finally stood triumphant on the plains beyond.

I pressed onwards, and passed over many a battle-field on which my gallant countrymen had proved victorious; and I may as well mention here how I

was equipped, and my mode of travelling. First of all, then, I had my redoubtable Circassian sword fastened to my side by the identical cord woven by the fair hands of my ever-to-be-lamented and ever-adorable Nazeek. In fact I could no more think of travelling without it than of travelling without my head. It was as dear to me as my heart's blood: it was the sword of liberty, the sword of safety; and the cord which bound it was the last and only pledge of the undying affection of Nazeek which remained to me. It was thus doubly endeared to me. Round my waist was bound a girdle of chamois leather, in which I had secured a brace of double-barrelled pistols and a keen-edged Portuguese stiletto. Under my clothes I wore flexible and light chain armour, and on my shoulders I bore a knapsack stored with necessaries, among which was a fair allowance of pemican. Here, as in my former journeys, I travelled by night, and practice had rendered this mode so congenial to my nature, that I could go on with more facility, and enjoy myself more than though I travelled by day; and practice had rendered me so adroit, and my hearing so acute, that I could tell the approach of danger with the unerring sagacity of the watch-dog.

I would then glide behind the trunk of some friendly tree, or couch down amid the long grass or shrubby jungle, and patiently wait till the danger had passed away. One evening, as I was wending on my way in the neighbourhood of Cabul, I met with a rather singular adventure. It was dark : heavy clouds careered athwart the heavens, and the moon had not arisen. Although not far distant from the chief city of the Affghans, the country was wild and desolate : in fact, it had not yet recovered from the devastating influence of war. On a sudden I thought I heard a moan issuing from a tuft of high grass on my right hand. I listened attentively ; I was not deceived ; I heard another, and another. Drawing my sword from its scabbard, I slipped down on my belly, and, drawing myself along the ground like a serpent, I drew near to, and cautiously looked into, the grass-tuft. There I beheld a wounded Affghan chieftain reclining on the ground. His arms were laid beside him, and he was evidently in much pain. Seeing no danger to apprehend, I made my presence known to him, and, after a few preliminaries, I sat down beside him amid the long waving grass. " You are an Englishman," said he, addressing me in my own language. " I have

too much reason to know an Englishman. It was one of your countrymen who lopped off my left arm, and he did it scientifically enough. I am not yet recovered from that keen-cutting blow."

"How came you to come in hostile contact with my fellow-countrymen?"

"Why, I was one of those enterprising Affghans who under the banners of our young prince assisted Lal Singh and his brave Sikhs in their noble struggle for independence. The fatal day of Goojerat proved the grave of all our hopes: we were soundly beaten and driven headlong back again into our own country."

"You could not expect any other result."


"Perhaps you 'speak the truth, but on the supposition that that disastrous day had terminated differently, I would not have given the tassel of my sword-belt for your Indian empire. From one extremity of India to the other, every nation which embraces the religion of Mahomet would have risen simultaneously, and the few Europeans who now lord it over the fairest portion of the globe would have been lost and submerged even as a drop of water in the boundless ocean."

"You forget the Hindoos," said I.

“ The Hindoos ! ” said he, with an air of supreme contempt. “ The Hindoos ! effeminate school-girls and natchez dancers. Old Lal, with one of his mountain regiments, would have swept through and dissipated the whole cowardly mass ! ”

“ You found these despised Hindoos,” said I, “ more than a match for you at Sobraon and Mooltan.”

He appeared not to like this allusion, and abruptly changed the discourse. I could not, however, but deeply reflect on what he had just said, and I must confess that the safety of our Indian empire hangs on a brittle thread. In fact, it is the *prestige* of the English name that alone upholds our despotic power : that once lost, our total expulsion from the golden Peninsula would follow, and the brightest gem in the British crown would be plucked away for ever !



CHAPTER VIII.

WE ARRIVE AT THE FRONTIERS OF PERSIA—TREACHERY
OF MY COMPANION—HIS DEATH.

THE name of my companion was Mahommed, his residence (to which he was wending) on the extreme frontier of the Douranee empire. Under his auspices I travelled in comparative safety through the whole length of Affghanistan, without any remarkable incident occurring. My companion had by this time entirely recovered from his wound, and in proportion as that recovery took place, I thought I could trace a proportionate want of courtesy towards me. It is true he never treated me with absolute rudeness, because that I would certainly not have brooked, but still there was a something in his manner I did not like. I often caught him gazing wistfully at my beloved Circassian brand, and oftentimes greedily at the pouch, which, like the Highlanders of Scotland, I bore at my belt. I more than once suspected that he would like

to handle the one and rifle the other. How correct I was in my surmises the sequel will abundantly prove.

We had arrived on the frontiers of Persia, and on the following morning Mahommed would leave me. We pitched our tent beneath a wide-spreading strawberry tree: around us grew long wavy grass mingled with wild flowers, and at our feet bubbled a clear gurgling fountain. I unslung my knapsack, took out my pemican, and invited the Affghan to partake of the savoury morsel. I also unslung my belt, and placed it, together with my Circassian brand, by my side. I then threw myself by the side of the gurgling fountain, and eat my supper with much gusto, liquifying the solids with copious draughts from the silver waters. Having satisfied my hunger I felt inclined to sleep, and soon my eyes closed, and I fell into a comatose state.

I might have been in this state five minutes, when a slight jingling sound aroused me. I gazed around me, and saw that the Affghan had appropriated my belt, pouch, and pistols, and was in the act of grasping my more than brother, my trusty sword. With a quick motion I sprung to my feet and grasped the point, just as Mahommed had seized the hilt, and then en-

sued a desperate though brief struggle. I overthrew Mahommed, and once more my beloved companion gleamed in my right hand. The Affghan now drew one of my pistols, he raised it, his finger was on the trigger, it was close to my heart, death stared me in the face. I had no alternative, but uplifting my sword, with a tremendous blow I nearly severed the lower jaw from the head: my keen blade ringing against the last articulated vertebræ: he gave a gasp and a groan, rolled over on his back, and instantly expired.

I hugged my trenchant blade to my heart, that beloved blade which had thus again saved me from imminent death. Its silvery brightness was now tarnished with the assassin's blood, and on its keen flesh-kissing edge I saw three small dents, the well-earned badge of its glorious services. One was made when I split the head of Tchikagoff to the chin in the wilds of Circassia; one on the plains of Estremadura when I clove the clavicle of the Spanish bandit in rescuing my dear sister Maria from his ravenous clutches; and the third was made now against the obstinate vertebræ of Mahommed. I say obstinate, for if it had been more pliable his head would certainly have rolled on the ground. "Glorious sword!" ex-

claimed I; "invaluable friend! with thee and a willing and tough heart, what danger is there which we could not surmount? what enemy which we dare not encounter?" I then carefully wiped the blood from it: it smiled on me in silvery brightness, I reverently kissed it, and then placed it in its accustomed bed of repose.

CHAPTER IX.

MY ARRIVAL IN GEORGIA—I MEET WITH AN HOTTENTOT
GIRL.

ON then I wended, over field, fell, and mountain, with my dear companion smiling cheerily by my side. We had, however, no need to exercise our united prowess throughout the whole length of Persia : in fact, Persia is not only in strict alliance with Great Britain, but her people universally are much attached to the English. So far from meeting with any obstruction, my journey was forwarded by every means in their power. I was, however, sorry to see that the country was in a high state of declension : her once gorgeous cities were only half-peopled, and falling to decay ; and large tracts of beautiful and fertile country remained rude and uncultivated. Even imperial Ispahan herself, gorgeous and beautiful as she undoubtedly is, did not altogether escape the contagion of the universal deterioration. The florid palaces of the aristocracy, it

is true, mocked the dazzled skies with their inlaid gem-interlaced pinnacles, but then, on the other hand, the people, the sole index of a nation's prosperity, appeared abject and discontented; and there was no middle class to unite the two extremes of social life.

I traversed over a large portion of Georgia, and the sublime Caucasus loomed in the distance ere any remarkable event happened to me. It was evening, and I was looking about among the high rank grass and stunted bushes for my night's lair, when I saw what appeared to me to be a bundle of rags coiled up beneath a luxuriant hawthorn shrub. I was, however, rather startled when the bundle, on my pressing my foot against it, emitted a sullen groan, slowly uncoiled itself, and presented to my view what I afterwards found to be an Hottentot girl, and, with the exception of the waistcloth, in a state (according to the custom of her country) of complete nudity.

Juno (for so I afterwards called her) was short, and rather squab in figure, with large misshapen limbs, elf-like arms, and a broad, yellowish, black countenance, flat nose, as though pounded forcibly into her

visage with a mallet, thick lips, low forehead, thick stubby locks, apparently a mixture of hair and wool, and eyes of prodigious obliquity. When she had risen to her feet and stood before me in all her unique proportions and graces, she placed her hand on her breast, looked me earnestly in the face, and said, in a tremulous, timber-tone voice, "me no hurt, massa ! me no hurt !"

"I will not hurt you," said I, at the same time smiling good-humouredly. Now I have always found that my smile wins more confidence for me than my words : it is a joyous, guileless smile, undoubtedly of Saxon extraction. My words are often misplaced and misshapen, but my smile is ever honest and hilarious. It seemed to have an instantaneous effect upon my fair companion, for she advanced, smiled in return, gave me a hearty hug, and rubbed her flat nose against mine several times in succession.

I was, however, glad to get out of the clutches of that too strict embrace, as more senses than one were offended by it. It was, however, considered an amicable ceremony by my fair friend, and after it was performed she seemed more at ease. She sat down

by me in the long grass, and the following conversation ensued :—

“ Who are you ?” inquired I.

“ Shuno, de Hottentot gal !” replied she, with a grin.

“ Have you any relatives or friends, and if so, where are they ?”

“ Me hab no fader, no moder, no briend ; they be nowhere.”

“ What brought you here ?”

“ An Inglis big mon as de cook.”

“ And you ran away ?”

“ No, massa, me no run, me walk away : mister was no vond of grease : he turned me out.”

“ Your habits were not cleanly ?”

“ Me no habit, grease be mine habit.”

“ Whither are you going ?”

“ Wid you, please, massa.”

There was something so comic in this abrupt declaration, and it was delivered with so much simplicity, that I could not forbear laughing : this, I suppose, she considered an indication of my consent to her proposal, and she appeared so elated by it, that she approached me, evidently with the intention of rubbing

noses. I felt, however, no ways inclined to go through that touching ceremony, so I arose to my feet and slunk away ; but she arose too, and oh, horror ! walked after me. I quickened my pace, she quickened hers, with her nose thrust as far before her as possible. I was soon obliged to run for it, and she ran too. Then we dodged one another behind the trees and bushes for a long time. She would not give in ; she appeared fully resolved to have a second edition of the nose ceremony. We still kept running and dodging about. At length, in passing swiftly round the trunk of a large oak-tree, I ran unconsciously into her extended arms. Then, in spite of my struggles, she commenced rubbing her nose furiously against mine. "This will never do," said I mentally ; "if I stand any chance of getting out of this more than Cornish hug, I must rub too." So I gave her rub for rub ; and no sooner had she felt the reciprocal embrace than she gave me a more than ordinary strenuous rub, squatted down in the long grass, and beckoned me to sit down by her. This, however, I would not consent to, but nevertheless seated myself down, but at a most respectful distance.

Here, then, was another curious predicament I had

placed myself in. By the act of rubbing noses, I had accepted Juno for my travelling companion ; it is true we had not tasted salt together, but we had performed a ceremony equally as binding on the conscience—we had rubbed noses: nothing more sacred could be achieved.

CHAPTER X.

JUNO AND THE SWORD.

IT is astonishing how soon disagreeable things by being constantly presented to the sight lose their repulsive features, and may even in the end become engaging. I have already dilated on the flat nose, blubber lips, fishy eyes, and woolly powl of Juno, yet I had not travelled with her more than a week ere she became absolutely handsome in my estimation. By my advice she every day laved her body in the crystal waters which continually peeped up from among the heather of the dells; and this daily ablution so improved her appearance that her skin became less dingy—assumed a clear amber-like appearance, and the blue veins could be seen through it distinctly; and I most assuredly had not so much objection to the nose-rubbing ceremony as heretofore.

Juno likewise paid the most assiduous attention to my comforts: made me every night a soft couch of long

grass to repose on, generally sprinkled with flowers : she would then seat herself directly opposite to me, and would continue gazing upon me till I fell asleep. These assiduities had all a tendency to render her more agreeable in my eyes, and I often found myself sitting close by her on the green sward.

There was one circumstance, however, which caused me some uneasiness. Juno would gaze upon my Circassian sword for hours : she seemed never to tire of gazing on it. More than once, when dozing, I had seen her steal furtively towards it, and reach forth her hand as though to grasp it. Now, nothing so soon aroused my suspicions as any approach to or undue familiarity with my dear brother, the sword. It and its cord were the united gifts, and the only relics I possessed, of my lost Nazeek and the unconquerable Shamy! ; it was as dear to me as the light of heaven ; it had become a part and parcel of my very being, and I would rather lose life itself than lose my long-tried, my inseparable second self. Nor will those who have lost a dear friend wonder at the absolute idolatry with which I regarded the holy relics. I say, then, I regarded the proceedings of Juno relative to my sword with the utmost jealousy. What *could* she

want with it? I well knew what effect glittering gauds and baubles have upon the human mind, but my trusty sword could not be classed under either of these denominations. It is true, the gems with which its magnificent hilt was inlaid, and the silvery brightness of the well-tempered blade, might dazzle her senses; or seeing me treat it with such respectful attention, she might consider it as a species of fetisch: and that the latter opinion might be the correct one I am inclined to believe, and it will amply account for the extraordinary conduct I am about to describe.

We had made a longer march than usual; the day was sultry, and I was rather tired. Juno was more than ordinarily assiduous: she had paid more attention to my couch, made it of more than the ordinary magnitude; and instead of sitting opposite to me as on previous occasions, she sat down upon it, and in rather close proximity to me. I have already said that I had long ceased to consider her as disagreeable; in fact, I may say, I now felt a sneaking kindness for her. I was, therefore, not at all offended with her: she was a good-natured, good-tempered girl enough, why, therefore, *should* I be offended? We sat and chatted (as well as her broken English would allow

her) for a long time, till, overcome with fatigue, I fell into a deep sleep.

I must have slept several hours, and when I awoke I felt for my trusty sword, the dear companion of many a danger, but could not find it. I started to my feet in the utmost panic : I was alone, Juno and my trenchant blade were both vanished. At first I thought she had carried it off, and had hidden herself in some secret nook by way of joke, and in order to enjoy my perplexity ; but when I vainly searched every nook and corner in the vicinity I gave up the idea, and with furious precipitancy rushed forward in pursuit.

But whither direct my steps ? what clue could I possibly get in order to discover the abductor ? We were in the heart of the Caucasus, where the mountains are steep and precipitous, and abound in ravines and recesses of the most labyrinthine intricacy. It appeared impossible to catch the fugitive. On, however, I wended furiously, trusting that chance might by some occult means lead me aright.

For three successive days I scaled lofty precipices, where one false step would have hurled me a mangled corpse on the sharp-pointed rocks below. Then I slid

rather than walked down declivities almost perpendicular ; then wound through intricate woods, where my clothes were torn in piecemeal by the long-spurred briars, and my hands and my face lacerated by the hooked thorns. I swam rapids, waded through mountain rivulets, overcame all kinds of danger : nothing could impede my onward progress. I suffered cold, and hunger, and thirst : still I pressed forward : no lover ever sought his mistress with more intense, all-absorbing ardour than I did my lost brother, my more than brother. Fatigue had no effect upon me ; the mountains, iron-bound with perpetual frost, their lofty pinnacles enwrap in an eternal mantle of snow, were no more to me than so many mole-hills. I surmounted all things, I conquered all things : my more than brother, my glorious bride, beckoned me onwards ; and onwards I went ; and oh ! joy and happiness ! went not in vain.

I had just descended a steep declivity, and entered upon one of those lovely dells which spring up here and there in the sublime range of the Caucasus. A clear stream of crystal water ran in a devious course through the emerald, flower-covered valley, thickly overspread with gorgeous water-lilies. Craggy pre-

cupitious banks arose on each side, from which streamed, in bright festoons, the scented eglantine. By the banks of this stream, and beneath a beautiful strawberry-tree, I saw a human being in a kneeling posture, and something glittering like diamonds amid the branches of the strawberry-tree. Some undefined joy seized my breast, my heart beat wildly in my bosom. The human being before me bore some resemblance to Juno ; and could any earthly thing glitter so brightly except my lost brother ? It was Juno, and my trenchant much-loved companion. She had, as I suspected, converted it into a fetisch, and was now praying to it. I rushed joyously forward : she heard my impetuous footsteps, and sprung off up the almost perpendicular cliff, but left behind her my cord and my sword. Oh, joy ! oh, gladness ! the lost was found ! words cannot express my joy, my rapture, as I pressed it in my arms : never was that joy equalled, except when I first met my adorable Nazeek, after our first long separation.

Now do not thou, oh, gentle and courteous reader, set down the recorded feelings above respecting my sword as exaggerated and unnatural. Recollect, I am a lonely and isolated man : all my friends have long

since been gone ; my adorable bride Nazeek was gone ; my beloved sister Maria was gone. My sword and my cord were the only relics I possessed of the past ; all the associations connected with them were entwined with my very heart-strings, and ever will remain entwined till I am laid low in my narrow house.

But what became of Juno ? I saw her climb the almost perpendicular precipice, bounding from crag to crag like a startled chamois. In vain I made signs to her to come down to me, and that I would forgive her. I had a certain penchant for the maid, and so joyous was I that I had recovered my brother scatheless, that all resentment against her vanished, and I felt only alarm at the danger she was encountering : to get her from that danger I would willingly have rubbed noses. At length my fears seemed apparently confirmed ; I saw her topple down headlong ; what became of her I know not. I could never again find her or her remains : she must have been dashed to atoms.

CHAPTER XI.

MY ARRIVAL IN CIRCASSIA.

At length I entered Circassia; I stood once more on her hallowed ground. Again I breathed the invigorating air of the glorious free; but with what different feelings to those I felt when I formerly entered her patriot confines. Then I was blest with the presence of a Cara and a Nazeek. I was young in love, young in hope; my present and my future were alike imbued with the hues of pleasure and delight. Now I was a sad and isolated man, existing in the past. Shamyl the hero, the patriot, however, still existed, still carried on his glorious warfare. However dim, then, still I had a star beaming in the distance, which lured me onwards, and prevented my spirit from sinking into a state of total abstraction. To Shamyl then I determined to proceed. Driven from the plains, he now occupied the strong country

behind Achulgo ; and to arrive there, I should have to wind along the base of the Caucasian ridge. I, however, resolved to deviate a little from the direct route, and pay a visit to my old friend Elijah, the minstrel.

After encountering many difficulties in my way, I arrived on the border of that wood which had so nearly proved fatal to me in my first excursion. I again sat down by the old green-margined fountain, where I committed such a grand debauch with the partridges. The objects around me were still unchanged, still as beautiful as ever : the blackbirds still piped in the outhelia trees, and the stream still made music with the enamoured pebbles. It was evening, and all creation was bathed in beauty, all was still and peaceful ; and, in spite of myself, my mind gradually became composed, and, in the end, partook of the universal calm. I looked upon the past without agony : a sweet soothing melancholy stole over my mind. Suddenly I heard a rustling in the thicket of hawthorns near me, and a human figure appeared, cautiously approaching with a presented rifle in his hand. I sprang to my feet. "Elijah !" "Gherei !" were simultaneously uttered,

and I again found myself in the arms of my old friend the minstrel.

We sat down on the green grass together, and talked of the past, of Cara, Nazeek, and Shaml till a late hour.

CHAPTER XII.

THE TREE JOURNEY OF ELIJAH AND MYSELF.

THAT part of the country over which we should have to pass in joining Shamyl was occupied by the Russians, and our task would be one of the utmost peril. We, however, set out on our journey in good spirits, travelling by night and reposing by day in some quiet retired nook. That journey proved to me most delightful : the weather was fine, and scarcely a cloud floated in the heavens ; and when one did float, it was a beautiful crimson cloud, lighted up with the brilliant hues of the rainbow. The moon, likewise, glittered brightly through the interstices of the beautiful outchelia trees, and the fragrance from the flowers was tenfold more sweet than by day. The nightingale, too, regaled us with his sweet descant, and the swelling breezes, in the solemn silence of night, broke on our ravished ears with all the graces of Æolian melody.

When we rested for the day we generally selected

some retired nook in the hollows of the hills, overhung with festoons of eglantine and the broad-blossomed convolvulus. Those sweet nooks were generally irrigated with translucent streams of water, sometimes creeping among emerald water-cresses, at others spreading out into a broad silver estuary sprinkled profusely with water-lilies. Oftentimes, too, little cascades would trickle down the craggy cliffs, splashing and dashing, and with a gentle murmur, inviting to sleep.

After several days, or rather nights, of delightful travel, during which we certainly lingered by the way, (for what poet could possibly hasten from such a delightful region?) we arrived on the summit of a lofty hill, not far from Achulgo, where Shamyl and his brave band of heroes were beleaguered by the Russians. Between the hill on which we stood and that fortress there grew a dense wood, filling up a deep valley, or rather ravine, and extending even to the base of the steep impassable cliffs, which shut it in to the right and left. The only practicable path, which wound along the base of one of the cliffs, was occupied by the Russians, so that it seemed impossible for us to proceed farther. The trees, however, of the wood before us

were wedged close together, and their topmost branches so intertwined and interlaced with sweet-briar, eglantine, convolvulus, and other parasites, that it appeared possible to clamber along the tops; and as both Elijah and myself were complete adepts in scaling crags and precipices, a tree-top journey would come comparatively easy to us. So, on a beautiful moonlight night we mounted the silver stem of a wide-spreading beech-tree, and slowly and carefully wended on our journey.

On the first night of our novel mode of travelling, our progress was attended with little difficulty, so closely did the trees grow together, and so firmly were their topmost boughs interlaced with the sweet-smelling parasites. The moon poured a silver flood of light on our flowery highway, and we literally made our way over garlands of flowers, the odour from which almost overpowered us with its aromatic fragrance. Occasionally we could see the delicious green sward beneath us through the interstices of the trees, overspread with waving flowers of the most surpassing beauty and loveliness. On, on we clambered through a perfect wilderness of sweets, a perfect boundless sea of undulating flowers. And now the

sun arose, smiling through a mass of crimson gossamer clouds, changing our sea of silver into a sea of gold. Scarcely had his brilliant yellow beams fell aslant on our bowery pathway, ere we arrived at the summit of a majestic umbrageous oak-tree, all its topmost boughs interlaced and intertwined so strongly and securely with sweet-briars, eglantine, and convolvuli, that we determined to make it our bed of repose for the day. The centre of this verdant procreant cradle was rather depressed, and large wreaths of the mingled parasites grew around the hollow on every side, so that we could not fall from our elevated couch. Down, then, we threw ourselves on our fragrant bed of leaves and flowers: the odoriferous breezes arose, and, with a gentle motion and murmur, soon rocked us to sleep.

Again the silver moon arose, and again we wended on our journey. At length we came to a deep hollow, where lofty banks arose on every side, still crowned with the waving trees. It was a sweet secluded nook, and hundreds and thousands of birds had here constructed their airy builds. Their mossy nests, interlaced with inimitable art, were fixed in the very hearts of the sweet-briar and eglantine bushes, and their pretty little eggs shone through the quivering leaves

like varied-coloured diamonds. There the blackbirds, the thrushes, the linnets, and innumerable other feathered songsters, poured forth their perennial lays ; and the milk-white stock-doves for ever cooed their undersong of love. We paused, and looked upon, and listened to the pretty warblers. Our presence they scarcely heeded ; for never had the desolating presence of man cursed this delightful region. The flowers, the trees, the birds, had remained undisturbed and intact from the creation, a pure and unsullied appendage of the magnificent domains of ever-lovely nature.

It was with regret that we left this secluded glen of beauty and happiness. For three more nights we pressed forwards ; and now we came to a part of the wood where the trees grew with larger intervals between their stems, but still not wide enough to admit our passage between them, interlaced as they were with the underwood of the forest. We were, however, obliged to be more cautious in selecting our lodgings for the night, as the tops of the trees were not so securely knit together as we had hitherto found them. One day we took up our quarters at the top of a wide-spreading beech-tree, alive with the murmur of bees. From this beech to the nearest oak, there was a

and we at once saw the utter impossibility of joining him at present, as the fortress was beleaguered on every side by the Russians, who absolutely swarmed in every direction. We were now placed in a most anxious predicament. We could not go onwards, and to retrace our steps would be attended with greater danger than when we advanced, as the Russians had closed up on every side. With the careless and light hearts of minstrels, however, Elijah and myself sat down on the mossy banks of a rattling mountain rivulet, drew our provisions from our haversacks, made a hearty dinner, cracking our jokes, and making our solitary glen resound with peals of ringing laughter.

CHAPTER XIII.

ACHULGO.

THIS redoubtable fortress was situated in the gorge of a deep ravine, winding up a sterile and splintered hill. It was regularly fortified, somewhat in the European style, with irregular bastions connected by massive curtains. When we first saw it the morning was delightful, and its towers and pinnacles were clearly defined against the azure sky. On the central bastion floated my old friend, the national banner, the glorious Sangiac sheriff, torn, tattered, and battered with shot and stained with blood. Now, like the fortress and all around it, it reposed gracefully in the bright sunshine. The Russian infantry, which clustered in dense masses in every hollow and on every knoll around the fortress, were also in repose. The scene was certainly beautiful and picturesque, but on scanning it more narrowly we could discover evident traces of the ravages of war. The bastions were broken here and there, and in the breaches were

loosely constructed barricades and abatis, defended by stern but weak and attenuated warriors. In fact, the fortress had been beleaguered for months, the flower of the Russian army had perished before its hero-defended walls; but famine had been slowly aiding the besiegers, and only a sad remnant of the noble defenders remained to combat for their noble Achulgo—that Achulgo which will be as renowned in future annals as the ancient Saguntum or modern Saragossa: their hearts were good and willing, but their bodies were weak and unstrung. Whilst we still gazed we saw a universal movement along the Russian line: like bees, they swarmed in every direction. Suddenly, like a thunder-peal, the Russian batteries vomited forth showers of shot, willingly replied to by the cannons on the ramparts: we saw the iron shower break into fragments and sweep away the feeble barricades constructed in the breaches; and now rolling volumes of smoke enwreathed the devoted fortress, and the clanging thunder-peal ceased. The silence succeeding such a turbulent uproar was awful and sublime. Soon, however, we heard the sound of clanging blows reverberate from the bosom of the sulphurous cloud, and a gust of wind having arisen and swept away its rolling folds, we saw that the Rus-

sians had made an attack on every side, and were engaged hand to hand with the noble defenders in the breaches. Firm and dreadful, notwithstanding their disparity in numbers, did the noble Circassians defend every inch of ground : sometimes at one point the Russians might attain a footing on the breaches, at another they might be hurled down headlong in broken flight. The day wore along, and still the combat ceased not. We could plainly discern the hero ShamyI flashing about here and there, sometimes charging at the head of his iron bands, at another rallying his flying cohorts, and restoring, like a magician, the fight. As though he bore a charmed life, the shot and missiles showered about him thick as hail, and yet not a hair of his noble brow was singed. Oh ! how we longed to be by his side, how we chafed and pined because we could not overcome impossibilities and fly to his aid. There we stood on our lofty stand, oftentimes waving our caps in the air, and shouting "victory," as we saw the Russians hurled down headlong from the blood-stained breaches. The enemy, however, now drew fresh masses from their reserves, and again rush on the weak and exhausted Circassians. Alas ! ShamyI had no reserves to draw from. The heroes still combated with ail


the energy of despair : vain, however, that desperate energy. Slowly they were borne back, still cleaving many a Muscovite head. But now the breaches being won, thousands of Russians pour into the devoted fortress ; like clustering bees they absolutely swarmed around and on every side. And now we trembled for the fate of the illustrious hero, our old commander, our glorious friend. Throwing aside all prudence, all thought, we drew our swords, and were about to rush madly forward, when we saw a violent commotion on the great breach ; the clustering masses of Russians were split asunder as by a keen wedge, and forthwith rushed through the receding enemies, ShamyI, his glorious Sangiac sheriff, and a compact band of iron warriors. Vainly did the Russians cluster round them on every side, vainly did they hurl showers of grape and canister shot upon them ; they swept through every line, broke through every square, and finally, with a ringing shout of victory, disentangled themselves from the dense rampart of warriors which enclosed them on every side, and emerged on the free and unconquerable hills of their own Circassia, again free, and as willing as ever to peril all things for freedom.

CHAPTER XIV.

A SKIRMISH.

As fate would have it, the fugitives from Achulgo swept through the ravine at the base of the hill on which we stood. At the gorge of the ravine and nearest to us, the Russians had posted a strong body of infantry. The position they occupied was of great strength, amid precipitous crags and broken ground. Shamyl, unawares of the obstruction in his front, came dashing onwards; on a sudden, as though by magic, a volley of musketry burst forth from every bush, tree, and crag, emptying many a saddle, and riddling the glorious old Sangiac sheriff with torrents of shot. Cool as on parade, the hero formed his men in a compact body, and then charged headlong up the ravine. Excited to madness at the glorious sight, and anxious to aid and rejoin our immortal old leader, we drew our sabres round so that we could grasp them in a moment, and drawing our pistols from their bed of

repose, rushed on madly to the combat. When we reached the battle-field, Shamyl had plunged into the very midst of the enemy, and a desperate and dubious fight had commenced. Taking up our position in a holly-bush on the top of the ravine, we sent our balls crashing through the skulls of many a Muscovite. With the rapidity of lightning we loaded and re-loaded our instruments of death, and so close was the propinquity of the enemy, that every winged messenger we dispatched, did its good office. Our position, in the immediate rear of the right of the Russian line, was well calculated to harass and distract the attention of the enemy, and the Russian commander, unable to account for it, made a *reconnoissance* to discover the cause, and came so close to us, that a well-aimed ball from my excellent Manton went splashing through his heart, and down he toppled in the agonies of death. This event, by still further distracting the attention of the enemy, and at a moment when all their energies required concentration, proved the immediate cause of victory : for the eagle-eye of Shamyl perceived the momentary vacillation of the Russians, and redoubling his exertions, he burst through the opposing cordon, and, driving them impetuously before



him, arrived at that part of the field where Elijah and myself had done such good service. He instantly recognised me, grasped my hand warmly, with a "may the Great Tkha bless thee!" and immediately gave orders for me to be supplied with a war-steed. I speedily mounted, and rushed forwards on the right hand of the hero. I was again a Circassian, I was again in their free-born ranks, I was again combating for liberty. I was madly excited. I drew forth my noble brand and kissed it, and saw by its mirror-like brightness, that my brows were drawn together and corrugated into a fierce frown. Before us, a large body of the enemy had rallied and attempted to impede our farther progress. This gave the crowning impetus to my headlong fury. I rushed into the dense mass before me, and with my sword cut and slashed around me like a demon: many a Russian skull was split by that trenchant blade. I struck well and *con amore*. I was well seconded by ShamyI, Elijah, and the oi polloi, and the Russians soon sought safety in a precipitous flight.

CHAPTER XV.

I AGAIN FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY.

THE dearest wishes of my heart were again accomplished : I was again in Circassia, again with the heroic bands of the thrice-heroic Shamyl : my spirit, and even my very frame, seemed to dilate. I had opened before me a long and glorious vista : suddenly all my future hopes faded away, and I again became
— isolated and a miserable captive.


I was riding with Shamyl somewhat in rear of the main body,—we were conversing of Nazeek, and I saw the tears glisten in his eyes when I unfolded to him her premature death. Then we conversed on the present state and future prospects of his glorious country ; and he had just expressed his determination never to submit to wear the iron shackles of the oppressor, when a Russian cavalry detachment sprung up on our flank as by magic ; and ere we could rejoin the main body, an unlucky ball pierced the brain of

my noble steed, headlong he fell, and I was so entangled under him, that I could not draw my redoubtable brand, and was, consequently, captured without being able to strike a blow in my own defence. I, however, saw with pleasure that Shamyl had escaped the well-planned ambuscade. I was hurried off to Achulgo, and placed in a strong and secure guard-house. There I was treated with the greatest leniency. Luckily for me none of the Russians who were my opponents in my former excursions to Circassia were present; I was considered and treated in the light of a rescued captive rather than a prisoner of war.

I remained in Achulgo nearly a week, during which time I had ocular demonstration of the indomitable energy and endurance of Shamyl and his band of heroes. Every house was literally battered to atoms, and the very streets ploughed into furrows, by the showers of cannon-balls sent from the overwhelming batteries of the Russian. The trenches were literally filled with severed arms, heads, and blood; not a living Circassian thing could be seen—all, from the prowling rat to the noble and human-intelligent steed, had disappeared.

I was now sent with a strong body of Russian infantry, who were dispatched across the country to bring up a commissariat convoy from the Black Sea. During this excursion, I saw many of the well-remembered localities of my former excursions. I again passed over the fields of Dezile and Dargo, and again reposed by the well-known fountain where I had made the grand onslaught on the partridges. Luckily for my feelings we did not halt in the glen of the fountain where I first saw my adorable Nazeek:—it would have killed me to have called there. We passed rapidly onwards till we reached Tonaghu, where I was placed on board a Russian ship bound for Rosas, in Catalonia, where I was safely landed after a quick and prosperous voyage.

During my journey from Achulgo to Tonaghu I had ample opportunities of witnessing the feelings of reluctance, I may say dread, with which the Russian soldier combats the redoubtable warriors of Circassia. When he leaves the banks of the Wolga or the Dnieper for the Caucasus, he invariably makes his will, and never expects to return. In fact, whole armies of Russians, with the exception of a few of the chiefs, have been utterly and repeatedly




apt off by the keen blades of their unconquerable
;—I say unconquerable, for so long as the Elberous
untain stands on its base, so long will that heroic
ple hurl defiance and death on their heartless and
od-stained oppressors.

CHAPTER XVI.

ADVENTURES IN CATALONIA.

WITH my noble friend, my Circassian brand, girded to my side, behold me now, fearless and undaunted, wending over the romantic hills and valleys of Catalonia, with the lofty snow-covered pinnacles of the sublime range of the Pyrenees glittering in the distance. No scenery I had hitherto beheld abounded more in the picturesque than that amid which I was wandering ; and from the beautiful valleys and abruptly rising hills around me, a painter would find his greatest difficulty in selecting those most worthy his portfolio. As I gradually approached the Pyrenees the hills swelled into mountains and the valleys dwindled to ravines, the picturesque gradually giving way to the sublime.

It was on a delightful evening that I arrived in the vicinity of Montserrat. I was sauntering easily along the valley at its base, when my attention was



attracted by a slender volume of smoke arising from a clump of beech-trees, and as I passed round the base of a projecting crag I saw before me a camp of Gitanos. It consisted of an old grey-haired man bent double with age, a young man about twenty-five, and two girls exactly alike in feature, in height, and in dress, with clear olive complexions, black sparkling eyes, and long, black braided hair, reaching down to the girdle, and evidently twins. The camp, as I before stated, was formed beneath a clump of silver-stemmed beech-trees, amid green waving grass thickly sprinkled with flowers. A mule, just unharnessed, grazed before the door of a rudely constructed tent, sometimes plucking the leaves of an eglantine which grew beneath one of the beech-trees, twining around it in many a mazy fold. It was a pretty picture of still life, and I could not forbear stopping and gazing upon it. No sooner did the maidens perceive me so gazing than they whispered something to the old man, who gave a reply inaudible to me. It had, however, an instantaneous effect on the maidens, who came tripping up to me like a brace of fawns, and invited me to their tent.

With alacrity I complied with the request of the

maiden so smilingly conveyed, and I followed the black-eyed sparklers as they featly tripped it over the heather. We speedily arrived at the tent, on the green sward of which was spread a delicious repast of roasted partridges, brown delicious-looking country bread, a hare omelet, a large jar of maiden honey delicious to look upon, and several bottles of Andalusian wine,—a feast for an emperor. Down I sat between the merry maidens, and did full justice to the delicious viands placed before me, anon paying visits to the partridges, then visiting the bread and honey, then scooping out a due modicum from the omelet, then taking a hearty swig from the long-necked wine bottles. Sometimes I would pause and chat with the merry maids on my right and on my left, turning to each alternately, cooing, but not as yet billing. Then I would again turn to the partridges, the hare omelet, the bread and honey, and the Andalusian wine. The feast and the maidens equally divided my attention: it was a regular neck and neck race, and I do not believe that the most knowing Epsom hand would have known how to have betted on the occasion.

I, however, observed that when I paid particular



attentions to the maiden on my right hand, the brows of the young male Gitano contracted into a formidable frown. Here was another precious predicament I had fallen into. I had obviously made up my mind to fall in love with one of the pretty Gitanos, but one of them was evidently the ladye-love of the louring youngster before. Now it was impossible to distinguish the one from the other : they had the same sparkling eyes, the same aquiline nose, the same clear olive complexions, the same black hair, knit into the same fascinating braids, the same small feet, the same tapering legs, the same rounded bosoms and arms, and I verily believe that if the hairs of their glossy heads could have been numbered, the number would have been precisely the same in each. As I said before, when I paid particular attention to the maiden on my right, the brows of the young male Gitano grew as black as night, so I gave an extra dig into the omelet, and an extra swig at the wine bottle, and turned to the maiden on my left. Scarcely, however, had I commenced the cooing system, and was about to adopt the billing one, when the young male Gitano uttered a menacing growl. "What, wrong again!" said I, mentally : "does the fellow mean to monopolise the

twain? I shall certainly get that long knife of his six inches deep in my midriff presently." Now the fact of the case was this; during my extra dig at the omelet and my extra swig at the Andalusian wine, the wicked girls had contrived, whilst my whole attention was so engaged, to change places, and thus I was still unwittingly making love to the wrong lady. I again say I was placed in a most awkward predicament,—when, in the whole course of my eventful life, have I been differently placed?

The name of the old Gitano was Gabriel, Raimon the name of the young man, and Isabella and Mary the names respectively of the ladies; and I now found that Mary was the beloved of Raimon. I instantly determined to coo with Isabella: but how the deuce was I to accomplish this difficult feat? For the first week of our travel together, (for I joined their camp as an amateur volunteer,) I was making perpetual mistakes, wooing Mary as often as I did Bella; and, on these occasions, I more than once detected the long knife of Raimon half unsheathed. By degrees, however, this solecism was rectified: Bella grew more loving and less mischievous; and at length she agreed to give me a private signal when I was

billing at the wrong lady. Bella had a pretty kissable dimple on her prettier chin ; and when I was about to commit myself, she pressed her fore-finger on the dimple. I was now pretty secure, and made love as fast and as furious as I pleased.

CHAPTER XVII.

OUR MODE OF LIFE.

OUR mode of life was as free and independent as the winds : we wandered wherever we listed ; and even as the unseen air-god occasionally stops in his devious course, and kisses the trees and flowers at will, so did we select all the pleasant nooks and quiet places we could light upon for our encampments : sometimes by the banks of a silver streamlet, straying occasionally through beds of water-lilies and green cresses ; at others sparkling and bubbling over translucent shallows, discovering all the secrets of its breast ; at others in some sweet nook, surrounded on all sides by mossy crags, over-run with the gently waving broom or more obstinate furze. Then we would spread our rural, delicious banquet beneath the sweet-smelling broom, or amid the more sweet-smelling heather, and sit down altogether, I close by the side of the bewitching Bella, (now, no mistake,) Raimon by his

Mary, and the old grey-haired patriarch on some lichened crag, or daisy-covered mound, a little more elevated than the other seats. Then, with joke and glee, and song, we would set care at defiance, and laugh at the world.

After our repast, we would sometimes execute a bolero, or fandango; and I could not but admire, I could not sufficiently admire, the graceful and agile motions of Bella. Her whole soul seemed to be wrapt up in the plastic movements of the dance, and twisted and twined about with the limberness and lightness of the gazelle. Oh! how those black eyes of hers would sparkle as she glided about, her small feet beating the ground without an audible sound, as though floating in air. Oh, heart of hearts, when will that name be obliterated from my memory? Not as long as that memory survives.

The dance over, we again sat down, I nestling close by the side of Bella, Raimon by the side of Mary, old Gabriel, by this time, fast asleep. Then would commence our billing and cooing. With my left arm round the slender waist of my beloved, her right more than half encircling my neck, I would murmur delicious nonsense in her ear, and occasionally taste the delicious

balm of her red, pouting lips ; and generally at this interesting moment that old rascal Gabriel would give a snort and a grunt, and open his hateful eyes. We were then obliged to place a wider interval between us, and mentally to wish (at least I did) that the old fellow was pitched into Hades.


And pray, sir, where was Raimon and Mary all this time ? Why on the opposite bank, my good friend, and enacting a comedy precisely similar to our own.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I PART FROM THE GITANOS.

THUS happily passed our days, and Bella and myself grew inseparable. I certainly loved her, but not with the all-absorbing, tempestuous love I had felt for my adored Nazeek, or the mild angelic love I had felt for my poor Maria. It was a love having a regard solely for the transcending beauties of the corporeal frame, without at all taking into account the graces of the mind. And I never knew any maiden more capable of gratifying this species of love than Isabella: her whole form was cast in the choicest model of beauty, not even surpassed by the Medicean Venus.

One delightful summer's evening we had fixed our camp in a delicious nook in the western corner of Catalonia, not far from the frontiers of France. It was a cool, delightful evening, and old Gabriel, Isabella, Mary, and myself, were seated on a mossy bank, overspread with patches of soft green moss,



through the interstices of which peeped forth many a bright-eyed wild flower. Raimon was absent, and gave out, when he left, that he should not return till the following morning. Now Raimon was of a peculiarly jealous turn of mind ; and notwithstanding my constant billing and cooing with Bella, had taken it into his stupid head that some terrible clandestine love affair likewise existed between Mary and myself too. This journey was a mere pretext to test the truth of his suspicions, for he had hidden himself in a fern-brake, from whence he could see everything that passed in our encampment. Now the twin sisters, knowing the fierce and jealous temper of Raimon, had long since ceased the dangerous practice of one personating the other when he was present ; but, on the present occasion, deeming him far distant, they played me the pliskie which I am about to record.

Directly in front of our rural seat there was a smooth shaven piece of greensward, shut in by hawthorns in full blossom. Bella, at my request, stood forth and commenced the graceful fandango. Oh, I shall never forget how delightfully she moved, like a sylph floating and gliding in air. Her black, sparkling

eyes glistened with delight and excitement, her prehensile body undulated to and fro with the most graceful movements. There she glided about, clashing her castanets, sometimes approaching me, anon retreating, then gliding to and fro before me, then twirling round in several mad gyrations, all the while throwing at me the most arch and bewitching smiles. No wonder that, when she ceased and sat down by me on the verdant bank, I threw my arm round her beautiful white rounded shoulders, and invaded, with a storm of kisses, the heaven of her red, pouting lips. Just at this interesting moment, old Gabriel, who had been dozing, gave a snort and a grunt, opened his hateful eyes, and I was obliged to sit at a more respectful distance from the fascinating Bella.

By this time the sun had declined far, and was half hidden below the horizon ; and a shade of gloom, deepened by the trees, had overspread all things. This favoured the transformation which the wicked Mary had effected, for during a short conversation I had maintained with old Gabriel, and when my attention was fully engaged, she had changed places with Isabella, so that when I sat down, I unwittingly

sat down by the side of Mary. I still, however, addressed her as Bella; and, taking advantage of the deepening gloom, gave her, in spite of old Gabriel, a warm kiss. Scarcely, however, had this taken place, ere Raimon sprung from his hiding-place, his countenance distorted with passion, and whirling his long, glittering knife in the air. So impetuous was the onset, that I received a severe stab in my right arm ere I could grapple with him. I strove to disarm him, and, in the struggle, we both rolled on the ground. I found I had to do with a powerful, agile antagonist; and, even unwounded, I should have had great difficulty in mastering him; but when my right arm was nearly disabled, and my whole frame wrecked by loss of blood, I had not the slightest chance. Still, however, I struggled on, and, in the struggle, we often rolled one over the other. At length, overpowered with exertion and loss of blood, I fainted.

When I returned to a state of consciousness, I was alone, the Gitanos were gone. I heard, however, loud and reiterated screams issuing from a neighbouring wood: it was the voice of Bella: I am certain it was her voice; and she called upon

me. They were evidently forcing her unwillingly away. I strove to rise and fly to the rescue, but I was too weak to move: I certainly rose to my feet, but again fell down, weak and exhausted.

CHAPTER XIX.

CABRERA.

THUS abruptly terminated my *liaison* with the too-fascinating Isabella ; and perhaps it was fortunate for me it did so, otherwise I might even now have been ranging the hills and valleys of Catalonia or Navarre. I might myself have become a confirmed Gitano ; and I must here record that I ever had a sneaking kindness for that mode of life : there is something in it so free, genial, and independent.

My wound proving more troublesome than I expected, I sojourned for about a week in the cottage of a goat-herd, and lived chiefly on black bread and water-cresses. This abstemious diet no doubt greatly contributed to my convalescence, which speedily took place ; and as I progressed to strength and health, I vexed, fretted, and fumed, that I, who had evinced such remarkable prowess, and on so many occasions, should have allowed myself to be conquered by a

swaggering Gitano. Then I consoled myself by reflecting that the attack was so sudden and unexpected, that the blow which ultimately disabled me was given even before I knew what the intentions of the would-be assassin might be ; if, however, I could only have had time allowed me to unsheath my redoubtable friend and brother, my Circassian sword, most assuredly there would have been another dent to add to those glorious dents already honouring its bright blade.

At length I was so far recovered as to be able to proceed on my journey. I was now in the heart of the Pyrenees, and began to find the winds biting and cold. I also heard that my old friend Cabrera still carried on his warfare in my immediate neighbourhood. The Count de Montemolin was expected to cross the frontier to join his enthusiastic supporters ; and Cabrera had drawn nearer France, in order to afford him protection in his hazardous journey. It was drawing towards evening, on a somewhat gusty day, when I arrived on the brow of a rugged cliff-like height, which commanded a bird's-eye view of a ravine, winding labyrinthically among broken knolls and precipices ; and in the very middle of this apparently

unapproachable position I saw a band of armed men. The main body were quietly enjoying their siesta, with sentinels and pickets thrown out in every direction. There was one individual, however, who took no rest, but wandered about like a restless spirit, occasionally climbing to some abrupt point, and sweeping the surrounding country with his perspective glass. It was Cabrera himself, strong, vigorous, and agile as ever.

I was still gazing on the mimic camp, when I saw Cabrera ascending the precipice towards the very point I occupied. I advanced to meet him, but no sooner did he see me approaching than he covered me with his carbine. Seeing me, however, make no corresponding movement, he lowered the muzzle and advanced cautiously to meet me. When we met, he immediately recognised me, and gave me a hearty embrace.

We sat down on the rock beside us, conversed on the present state and hopes of the Carlists ; but he evidently regarded their cause as hopeless. " We expect our young king," said he, " but he comes too late : he ought to have joined us a year ago ; then perhaps, ere now, he might have been in the Escorial,

but now his noblest defenders are dispersed and hopeless. I still fight," continued he: "but it is as a desperate gamester who throws his last dice without hope, and without a possibility of the throw being successful."

We then conversed on my own intentions in thus again revisiting Spain, and I gave him a succinct account of my adventures, at some of which he laughed heartily. I then accompanied him to his encampment, partook of his mountain fare, and in the morning took an affectionate leave of my hospitable host. He sent a guide with me to conduct me through the most intricate part of my future route, and I arrived on the heights above St. Sebastian, without a single occurrence happening worthy recording in this veritable history.

CHAPTER XX.

MY SPEECH TO THE WOLVES, BEING, I PRESUME, THE
FIRST EVER MADE TO THAT REDOUBTABLE FRATER-
NITY—AND MY ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND.

ON making inquiries at St. Sebastian, I found that no ship was bound for England for a week or nine days. I determined to employ the interval in wolf hunting.

Girding myself, therefore, with my Circassian sword, and borrowing a double-barrelled rifle, I set out on my hunting excursion alone and on foot. I got into the heart of the mountains, scaled divers precipices, and penetrated through many almost impervious thickets, but the deuce a wolf could I see; they seemed all sunk into the bowels of the earth, or perhaps my queer truculent physiognomy might have frightened them away wholesale. At length I saw a whole herd, who, however, kept at a most respectful distance. "Gentlemen!" said I, "you think to get off scot-free, do you? Look sharp about you, or you

may perchance find yourselves mistaken." Notwithstanding this bravado, I still found I could not get at them. I at length resolved to resort to stratagem, so I cut into several pieces the carcase of a dead cow which I found in the woods, placed those pieces in a circular form, round a large quantity of gunpowder. I then laid a train from a neighbouring holly-bush to the gunpowder, and hid myself therein, with a lighted match in my hand. As I expected, the wolves soon congregated in a dense body and commenced devouring the carrion with the greatest voracity. I now applied my match to the train, and the gunpowder exploded with a tremendous rattle, overturning the wolves heels over head in all directions, and those who were able fled incontinently into the woods, uttering loud cries.

In performing the above-mentioned exploit I had, however, expended all my powder, and how was I to get back to St. Sebastian's, powerless as I now was and surrounded by legions of exasperated enemies? Now what I am about to relate may appear apocryphal to thee, oh, gentle and courteous reader, nevertheless it is quite as true as the other facts of this veritable history; and if thou hast ever read my

"Queer Book," thou wilt find anecdotes of animals recorded therein more wonderful than those I am about to lay before thee. When I laid my powder-trap, there was one tremendous large dog-wolf, with a muzzle grizzled by age, who kept aloof as though he suspected something wrong, and thus escaped with whiskers slightly singed. This old wolf kept dodging all my footsteps, prowling around me even within rifle distance. The old rogue knew by instinct (qy. reason?) I had expended all my powder, though by what mode of ratiocination he arrived at that conclusion I know not. He was, however, now evidently beating up for recruits, and first one joined him, then another, till he became the leader of a respectable army. With grins and howls they now closed round me, looking as truculent as so many devils. "I shall have it presently," said I; and scarcely had I spoken the words, ere the whole body took up a position in my front, with an evident determination to resist my further progress. I had heard a great deal of the awe inspired among the inferior creation by the human eye, so I stood still and gazed upon them: it was no go, they would not budge a peg, and I fancied the old dog laughed at me. Here was a precious fix I

had got myself into,—a seemingly perpetual fix ! The old dog now gave tongue, and a tremendous simultaneous howl burst from their whole army. They then grinned at me, and displayed ostentatiously their long, keen white fangs. “ Ah ! ah ! my gentlemen,” said I, “ you are after frightening me, are you ? You are putting on the grinning and mouthing dodge : egad, gentlemen, it will go hard with me, but what I match you there !” So I bent and corrugated my brows into the most formidable frown I could assume ; and those of my readers who know me personally, know also that my frown is grand and overwhelming : my eye-brows fairly met, and my eyes shot the most murderous glances through the thick mass of frowning hair closing around them. I then in a slow, emphatic, deep guttural voice spoke as follows, occasionally stamping my foot on the ground to give greater effect to my speech :—“ Gentlemen wolves ! you see before you Gherie the Anglo-Circassian, the Muscovite destroyer. He has travelled in many lands, and has performed prodigies of valour. He has made no bones of tigers, and unless you take to your heels he will make dry bones of you. Fly, therefore, evaporate, ye mangy crew !” So saying, I steadily advanced, laid

my hand on my glorious old steel, and partly unsheathed it. Bang jumped about two score wolves at me, overturned me and began nuzzling and rolling me about. Not one of them got their grinders into me, for ere that feat could be performed another of his fellows invariably shoved him off. In short, each was so eager to get a gripe at me, that that very eagerness prevented any single individual from effecting his object; and, instead of converting me into minced-meat, the whole *posse* soon engaged in a per-miscuous battle, snapping at and tearing at one another, thumping and trampling over my prostrate carcass, till it was one mass of petty bruises. Never did I witness such a heterogeneous *melee*, or listen to such a *melange* of diabolical sounds. It seemed as though a whole legion of devils in wolves' clothing held me in thrall. At length I heard the report of fire-arms, and the old dog-wolf fell dead upon my body, and his companions took precipitately to their heels. A hunting party, attracted by the noise of the affray, had arrived opportunely on the ground, and had providentially saved my precious body from utter macadamisation.

I would not, therefore, advise thee, oh, gentle and

courteous reader, to trust exclusively to thy eye, however formidable it may be, in a combat with the wild denizens of the wood ; neither would I advise thee to depend upon a set speech, even though that speech should possess Broughamite volubility and versatility. Believe me, lions, tigers, elephants, and as thou hast just seen even wolves, care not a fig for set speeches, care not a fig for the so-called magic influence of the human eye. I put my trust in these old-wives' fables, and got pounded to a jelly for my pains. I also lost a whole suit of clothes, for the teeth of the confounded wolves so lacerated it and tore it into so many picturesque rents and slashes, that it would have been utterly impossible for the most skilful snip in Christendom to make it wearable, and I returned to St. Sebastian an utter scarecrow.

Nothing else occurred in this flying tour worthy to be recorded, except that I embarked on board a Bristol merchantman, and after a somewhat tedious voyage again arrived in my native Albion.

ODD OCCURRENCES IN THE LIFE OF

BILL PROCTOR,

AND

A few more Remarkable Passages

IN THE LIFE OF

THE ANGLO-CIRCASSIAN.

DEDICATION.

MY DEAR JACK PROSSER,

As this portion of my work will contain a graphic sketch of that famous encounter in which you and your donkey bore such a conspicuous part, I think I cannot hit upon a better method of evincing the high admiration I entertain for your noble horsemanship (qy. donkeymanship?) on that occasion, than by dedicating it to you. I shall thus not only hold you up as a bright mirror of rittership to the present generation, but to every succeeding generation till time shall be no more.

But, Jack, when you next mount your mettlesome steed, pray get his other ear docked, for we all know that donkeys, as well as pigs, with one ear, present a highly ludicrous appearance. Likewise get Ben Latherum, the barber, to shave off that prodigious penthouse which you constantly carry on your cranium. "What the deuce," you, my dear Jack,

may exclaim, "do you wish me to appear on the course bald as a turnip?" Not so, my good friend : as soon as Ben has performed the tonsorial operation, buy a two-and-sixpenny box of Miss Scragg's celebrated Poluphlosboic Oleaginous and Detergent Ointment, anoint your caput, and, in ten minutes time, you will have a beautiful shining head of hair, self-arranged in the present mode of fashion, instead of that grizzly, piebald, rusty concern thou dost at present sport. I would also recommend thee, my dear Jack, to get a brace of additional buttons affixed to thy cow-skin waistcoat, for it is quite unseemly to exhibit, in such glaring colours, that buffalo hide of thine.

Brush thyself up, then, my dear Jack ; get the other ear of thy donkey docked ; have thy penthouse clipped ; purchase a box of the Poluphlosboic Ointment ; get two additional buttons affixed to thy cow-skin waistcoat ; and I shall ever remain

Thy true and faithful friend,

GHERI, THE ANGLO-CIRCASSIAN.

ODD OCCURRENCES IN THE LIFE OF
BILL PROCTOR,
LIME-BURNER AND GYP,
LICKED INTO SHAPE BY THE ANGLO-CIRCASSIAN.

OCCURRENCE FIRST.

THE OLD HOUSE AT HOME.

I WAS born in a woodman's cottage, in a wild, secluded glen in the deepest recesses of the Forest of Dean. The cottage was thatched, with mud walls, grown green (or, rather, streaked with green) from old age. It contained only two rooms, what is called in Scotland a but and a ben. The door was merely a few deal boards nailed loosely together, without even a lock, (as they fear not robbers who have nothing to lose :) its only fastening was a wooden latch, lifted up from the outside by a strong slip of bobbin. The floor consisted of several pieces of broken sandstone, with wide gaps between. Two chimneys, one from the but another from the ben, conveyed (or, at least, a

portion) away the superfluous smoke from the generally well-replenished fires. We had two windows, one to each room; and, to an imaginative personage, the cottage might be compared to some uncouth recumbent monster, on a small scale, the windows being its eyes, the chimneys its ears, the door its mouth.

Our furniture consisted of two rickety elm chairs, a pair of straw mattresses, or rather a pair of large wool bags stuffed with chaff, a large old-fashioned oblong table, supported on four gouty legs carved into innumerable devices, an iron pot for culinary purposes, a colander, and, above all, an immense coffer, an *omnium gatherum* for sheets, quilts, blankets, coats, breeches, petticoats, gowns, pieces of soap, ends of candle, reels of bobbin, tenpenny nails, and, in fine, everything connected in the remotest degree with general housewifery.

The glen in which the cottage was situated was not in the least allied to the beautiful or picturesque. It was a dull, heavy surface of black moss and stinted herbage, except, here and there, a green patch or two, which gave warning signs of a lurking quagmire. High and heavy-looking banks, without a crag or a tree growing upon them to relieve their dull monoto-

nous aspect, surrounded it on three sides ; and, on the fourth, a small opening allowed a distant glimpse of a huge shapeless hill covered with coarse black grass and stinging nettles, even to the very summit.

The inmates of this cottage were Hezekiah Proctor, Letitia his wife, and myself, reputed their only child. Hezzy was a short, thick-set, burly-looking fellow, with broad shoulders, and immensely long arms. In personal strength he was a very Hercules ; and he had been known to seize an angry bull, with one hand by the horn, and with the other by the nostrils, and pin him down like a bull-dog. Letty, his wife, was a little, thin, bustling personage, with keen black eyes, and a nose, the tip of which was as keen and sharp as a needle. She was highly irritable, and had a fluent tongue, as quick, voluble, and noisy as a respectable mill stream.

Hezzy was, by trade, a lime-burner, in which occupation he was assisted occasionally by Letty, so that in addition to the other disagreeables which surrounded our lonely abode, we were perpetually enveloped in a dense cloud of smoke ; and I was often amused at seeing the soot-begrimed pair toiling lustily at their Vulcan-like occupation, sometimes visible, sometimes

invisible ; sometimes in bright relief against a sudden outbreak of flame, then suddenly hidden from view by a rolling column of smoke ; at others looming to view indistinctly amid a mass of mingled smoke and flame, two black moving objects, which might be taken for human beings or demons, as the imagination might suggest.

OCCURRENCE SECOND.

BILL GIVES EARLY INDICATIONS OF AN ECCENTRIC
GENIUS.

FROM my earliest years I was a strange, wayward child, prone to mischief, and withal excessively inquisitive in prying into the nature of things. I once broke into fragments a choice saucer, a particular favourite of Letty, in order to see what might be the internal structure of the obese body of the Chinese Mandarin daubed thereon ; and I well remember how I was paralysed with surprise to find nothing but a brown congregation of gritty particles, where I had expected to discover the lungs, heart, and viscera of the solemn-looking oriental.

The second time on which I exhibited this incipient furor to discover the hidden springs of science was on the following occasion : Letty had a famous bellows, uniquely leathered, and inlaid with shining brass. The spout was made of iron, iron forged in a

first-rate Staffordshire forge. The two handles were cut in an oval form, preserving the exact line of beauty as propounded by Hogarth. On the whole it was a magnificent, and, to me, a wondrous machine. Often would I sit, struck dumb with amazement, and watch Letty puff, puffing away, till, from a small obscure spark, she had elicited a general grate-illuming conflagration. How was this mysterious combustion produced? did it proceed from the bellows? was it inherent in the coals and charred wood? These were questions I again and again revolved in my mind, and I could not give an answer satisfactory to myself. I at length determined, so intolerable grew my curiosity, to ask Letty to solve the mystery.

"Mother," said I, "what is it which lights the fire?"

"Whoy, tinder and ood to be zure."

"What lights the tinder and wood?"

"Whoy, the wind out of the bellis to be zure."

It was the wind, then, which caused the combustion I so much wondered at, and that wind proceeded from the bellows. But before proceeding from it, it must necessarily be in it. If, then, I could discover the

wind, my philosophic inquiries, at least that particular branch of science I had long felt so anxious about, would be brought to a satisfactory—a triumphant conclusion. I revolved many methods in my mind by which to carry out my intended experiment. I narrowly scanned the picturesque instrument from the tip of the handle to the tip of the snout: I pushed back the circular piece of leather in the belly, and peeped in there: I shut up my left eye, applied my right to the cavity at the end of the long, elegant-shaped spout and peeped in there:—all my labours were in vain, I could nowhere see the provoking mobile wind.

As is generally the case when curiosity is balked of its gratification, it grows more intolerable, the more it is dallied with the more insatiable it becomes. At least, it was certainly so in mine. “What is the wind?” This question haunted me by night, it haunted me by day; it became a regular bugbear—an incubus; it was ever knocking at the gates of my mind. I must get rid of it, or be miserable for life.

It chanced that both Hezzy and Letty were obliged one morning to be absent from home, it was seldom

the case that it happened so : but on this occasion they had received an extra order for lime. I was thus left alone with the wonderful machine which contained in the hidden recesses of its capacious belly what was to me more wonderful still the imprisoned, viewless wind. I seized upon the propitious opportunity now offered, pounced upon the bellows, and examined it in and out, and round about, all to no purpose ; the obstinate wind still retained its incognito. At length my suspense grew intolerable, and my anxiety painfully increased. "What *could* this hidden monster, this impalpable power be, which could be heard and felt, and yet not seen? I will hunt it into its most secret holes and corners," said I. —"I *will* see the wind!" And no sooner had I arrived at this determination, than I seized upon a keen-cutting carving-knife, and dissected the unhappy bellows from stem to stern. How was I struck with astonishment, how withered with disappointment, when I found that the agile monster had escaped unseen from his leathern prison, and had flown away without even thanking me for his liberation.

I still stood gazing in speechless astonishment on

the broken fragments of the bellows, and as they lay strewn upon the floor, when Letty returned from market, and on seeing the effects of my handiwork, she appeared petrified with astonishment. At length, astonishment gave place to anger, and her countenance gradually assumed a truly truculent appearance. "What the deuce!" said she, "stors and gorters, what *hast* thou bin a-doing to the bellis, eh? speak, thou gomeril, eh?" "I've been only searching for the wind," replied I, with much simplicity. "Vor the wind! looking vor the wind? Why, the bellis cost a shilling at Covut vair: I'll wind thee!" So saying, she took up a stubborn, obstinate holly-stick, tough as hickory, and belaboured me with all her might and power. No part of my person escaped her ferocious attack; the holly-stick reverberated on my arms, my head, my back, my sides, and at every third stroke she cried out, "That for the wind! that for the wind! by gor, I'll wind thee!" I bore all with exemplary patience. I was of a stern, dogged, obstinate temper: I *would not* cry out to please her. This appeared to increase her fury. "Cry out, you young gallows-bird!" roared she: "cry out; thou *hast* put out the pipe of the bellis, and I'll put out thy pipe, and make thee pipe

too." At length, after belabouring me till she was worn out and exhausted, she was compelled to give in, puffing and blowing like the instrument whose premature fate she so cuttingly, at least to me, deplored.

OCCURRENCE THIRD.

BILL'S FIRST REVENGE.

It was not to be expected that a bold heroic genius like me would tamely lie down under the merciless lashings of Letty, more especially when they had been inflicted on account of my too excessive love for philosophical investigation. For hours and hours I would sit moodily in the corner and brood over the late indignities so unsparingly bestowed. Revenge was my thoughts by day, my dreams by night ; the lashings required repayment, if not in kind, at least some equivalent. I was ever honest, and I fully resolved that repayment should be made, and an opportunity soon offered of clearing off old scores.

One of our forest customs was to contrive, by hook or crook, to procure a goose at Michaelmas—a fine fat hissing goose. The custom was undoubtedly a good custom, and not like many others which could be named, “ more honoured in the breach than the observ-

ance." For he, she, or it that likes not fat goose, must be an especial great goose himself, herself, or itself. So Hezzy and Letty, not to be behind-hand (gy. mouth?) with their neighbours, bought a regular obese stubbler of Farmer Trotman, (of whom, more anon,) brought it home, seasoned it well, and hung it up, as it were, to dry.

No doubt many high-wrought visions of delicious breast bits, [plump wings and melting legs, flitted before the mental eye of Hezzy and Letty; but the devil, who is always at hand when mischief is brewing, and ever ready to give it a shove and a fillip, put it into my head to mar those beatific visions. It so chanced that Hezzy had laid in a tolerable stock of gunpowder for poaching purposes, and, watching a favourable opportunity, I purloined a considerable portion of this (in truth) devil's elixir. I then seized occasion by the forelock, injected a *quant. suf.* of the deleterious article into the belly of the goose, placed a small roll of touch-paper in a fundamental position relative to the anser, then sat down, and calmly and demurely awaited the result of my volcanic operations.

Scarcely had I charged my mine, ere Letty came in, took down the obese biped, and carefully, and with

much ceremony, placed it on the spit. She then walked to and fro, gazing and re-gazing upon it, her mouth in a high state of pluvial agitation, evidently anticipating the gastronomic acme so rapidly approaching. At length a few stray hairs near the rump of the goose attracted her particular attention : they destroyed the beautiful *tout-ensemble* of her valued and deservedly valued roast : those intruders must be expelled, must be radically extirpated ; and she adopted the method usually chosen by culinary *artistes* to attain that desirable object, namely, by the agency of combustion. The wind stirring up combustion had been the cause of my late basting, and I employed at least one of those agents to mar the basting of the goose, and it had the wished-for effect ; for no sooner had Letty, with a piece of lighted paper, commenced the necessary operation of singeing, than the touch-paper, sympathising, as it were, with its fellow-paper, broke out into a similar Vesuvian blaze : the pyrotechnic materials I had placed in the belly of the goose was seized with a like mania. An awful eruption took place : the bipedal creature was transformed into a volcanic crater, throwing out legs, wings, breast-bits, and gravy in all directions, regular showers

of ignited lava, as it were. Old Letty was blown heels over head into the middle of the room, where she lay for several minutes, black, scorched, and motionless. In the end she gathered up her long length, sat on her hinder end, her face white with terror, and trembling in every limb. "I'm a dead 'oman," groaned she, "dead as mutton. The divil, the goose! the goose, the divil! I'm blowed if tis'nt a burning shame that that ere old Sattin should have power to burn and blow up the goose; and not only to blow up that ere goose, but to make me cut a zomerzet like a lamplighter."

At this point of her lament, my risible faculties were so much tickled that I rushed out of the room, threw myself on the ground, and burst out into an incontrollable fit of hysterical laughter.

OCCURRENCE FOURTH.

BILL'S SECOND REVENGE.

I KNOW not how it came to pass, but Hezzy suspected that I was the original cause of the goose catastrophe. I often observed him eyeing me with a knowing leer, a kind of half-muddled, suspicious, vacillating look. Letty firmly believed that "Sattin" had done the "deed of dreadful note." "Indeed he did," she would again and again repeat. Not so old Hezzy: he could not, somehow, persuade himself that the devil, now-a-days, engaged in such palpable pranks. "Besides," said he, "if it wor the divil, instid of scortching Letty's chaws, and peeling off the tip of her nose, he would have blown her yead off, or, at leastwise, have dished her tongue, eh?" From this time Hezzy honoured me with particular observance: he crossed me at every turn, and narrowly watched my incomings and my outgoings. I was far from relishing this constant *surveillance*; it created a kind of rebellion in

my mind, and stirred up all the atrabilious qualities of my somewhat eccentric genius. I determined to retaliate ; and an opportunity soon offered of attaining my object, of killing two birds, as it were, with one stone, for both Hezzy and Letty became the victims of my second revenge.

Hezzy had an old leathern breeches, which had seen the service of some ten summers, and, mayhap, if all things bowled along smoothly, might see the service of ten more. They were thickly japanned with grease, and comely to look upon. On Sundays those unique nether integuments were hung up on a peg to dry, as it were, while the owner sported a pair of rich velveteens in honour of the day. Now it so chanced that Letty was excessively fond of salt fish, and the thinner and cheaper she could get them, the better was she pleased, as thereby she saved an extra copper to lay out in gratifying her nasal promontory, which loved to come into close contact a thousand times a day with the best Scotch rappee. Now Letty chanced to purchase a piece thinner than ordinary, and this happened on a Sunday, when the breeches were hung up to dry. Hezzy and Letty both chanced to be absent, (I believe at church,) but before

leaving home, the latter had carefully deposited the fish in the pot, giving me particular directions to keep it well boiling. No sooner had they evaporated than a notable crotchety took possession of my cranium. Hezzy was ever scowling upon me, and crossing my path. Letty often made the cane play a tattoo upon my shoulders. If I substituted the breeches for the fish, I should revenge myself on both: each would be despoiled of a dinner; and, in addition, Hezzy would be bereaved of his breeches. I accordingly took down the breeches, and, with a shears, shaped it out so that it exactly resembled the piece of fish in the pot: I then took out the fish and substituted the piece of breeches in its place. I then made a good rousing fire, placed the arm-chair before it, and very demurely and unconcernedly seated myself before it, as though I had done nothing out of the common run or tide of affairs.

When Letty came home the first thing she did was to examine minutely the state of my culinary preparations. Everything appeared satisfactory: there was a good fire, and the pot good-humouredly sung its mellow undersong.

"It is rather tough," said my aunt, sticking

her fork into the fish, "and requires a moin lot of boyling."

"I thought myself it was *rather* tough," said I, with the utmost simplicity. "I'll bet sixpence 'tis an old John Dory."

"No it 'ant an old Dory neither, Mister Imperence; it is too fat by alf for a John Dory: you be always sticking your vinger into every body's pie."

"And if it's a nice pie, why not?" inquired I.

"Hold your tongue,—mind your own buziness," said Letty.

"It isn't over and above white for a fish," said I, peering into the pot. "Why I declare 'tis as mottled as father's leathern breeches!"

Letty again stuck her fork into it. "The devil tak the vish," said she: "I zink it grows tougher and tougher!" Here she threw at least a hundred-weight of coals upon the fire; it flared up with a crackling noise, and the water in the pot roared and whirled about like a second Mælstrom.

"It will do now," said I, sticking the fork into the leathern breeches; "it is as soft as lamb."

"Dish it, then," said Letty, peremptorily.

I instantly, and with much willingness, obeyed her mandate.

"What a strange, brown-looking vish!" said Letty.

"It is a strange fish—an odd fish," said I, with much solemnity: "nevertheless, pray help me to a slice."

Here Letty took up the carving-knife, and began to cut away, but could not make the slightest impression on the obstinate breeches. "Of all the vishes it has ever bin my lot to cut up," said Letty, "this bangs all: why, 'tis as tough as bend-leather!"

"The knife is blunt, and wants whetting," said I, hardly able to restrain my laughter.

Here Letty took up the steel, and commenced whetting the carving-knife. Again and again did she feel the edge, and again and again did she draw it with might and main up and down the steel, grumbling and growling like a rhinoceros.

"Blow me," said Letty, "if it be'n't as kin as a pen-knife." And again she sawed away at the leathern breeches, and succeeded at length in cutting off a small slice. This she conveyed to her own mouth, and commenced the operation of chewing. She first tried one side of her mouth, then shifted it to the other, all the time making the most horrible grimaces. "Why, it is as tough and tastes all the world like a jackass's pack-saddle," said she.

"Your mouth is out of taste," said I.

"No it a'nt," said Letty, "but the vish be very much ; it be a stickle-back, a hundred ear hold."

Letty still kept grinding away at the breeches, but the deuce a bit could she masticate. At length she chewed herself up into the most horrible rage. "I will never buy another ounce of vish of Bridget O'Connor: never wor there sich horrid vish put a-table, faugh! out wi sich stuff!" Here she incontinently flung the kettle, fish, and all out upon the dung mixen.

"A pretty kettle of fish," exclaimed I.

* * * * *

"Where the devil be my leather breeches?" exclaimed Hezzy, as he jumped out of bed on the morning after the fish catastrophe. "Where the devil be my leather breeches?"

"On the peg, ahind the door," said Letty: "where should they be, eh?"

"By gor, they beant!" said Hezzy, "nor can I vind em nowhere!"

"It be very stronge," said Letty, looking under the bed, over the bed, and peering into every corner and rat-hole. "It be very stronge, the breeches be not here."

Now it so chanced that when Letty pronounced the last words, she was looking into the tea-pot. "It would be very stronge, very stronge indeed if the breeches should be there," said Hezzy. "What should bring the breeches in the pot?"

Here I, who had been sitting very demurely in the corner, not attending very particularly to the antecedents of the discourse, fell a trembling all over when the ominous words "breeches in the pot" struck on the tympanum of my ears, for I verily thought that my notable exploit had been found out, and that, by way of retaliation, the tender parts of my bones, sinews, and muscles would be found out by the trenchant cane of that redoubtable boy-flayer. So, as I said before, I turned as pale as death, and trembled all over like an aspen leaf.

"What be'est thou a shaking at?" said Letty: "do'st thou know where thy veather's leather toights be?"

"No wonder I shake," said I, in accents rendered as lugubrious as I could make them.

"What be the matter, hang-dog?" roared Hezzy, in imperious accents.

"No wonder I tremble," said I, "after what I have seen."

"What hast thou seen, eh?" said Hezzy, "out wy it, man?"

"The devil!" said I, affecting to tremble more than ever, and conjuring up a most horrible grimace.

"And where wor the devil? what wor he about?" demanded Hezzy.

"The old gentleman," said I, in solemn accents, "came into the kitchen in a peal of thunder: he walked deliberately up to the fire, looked into the pot, put in his right paw, took out the fish, and looked at it all over. 'Faugh,' snuffled he, through his nose, 'it stinks!' and bang he threw it back again: he then took a leisurely survey of the but and the ben, evidently on the prigging lay. At last he saw the leathern breeches, pounced upon it in a minute, and flew off with it."

"By gor, wonderful!" exclaimed Hezzy. "How was the divil drest?"

"Black coat, red waistcoat, thick high-lows, grey stockings, and a green wide-awake."

"Thou hast not zaid whot wor the colour of his breeches," said Hezzy.

"He had none," said I, "and it is as plain as a pike-staff that he stole yours to supply the deficiency."

"Then," said Hezzy, "the divil is an arrant fief, and desarves to have his horns knocked off his yead."

"What can we have done to him," said Hezzy, "that he is so weterate agen us? He blowed up the goose, and now he is off wi' the breeches. What in the name of Sattin will be his next sploit?"

By this time Hezzy had slipped into his best velveteens, and walked off, whistling vehemently—

"There was an old woman tossed up in a blanket,
Ninety times as high as the moon."

OCCURRENCE FIFTH.

A POETIC EFFUSION.

I WAS a bit of a parcel poet, and a nob in the Welsh language: to prove both assertions, I here present to thee, oh, reader, a translation from the Mdwggdyggion, written at fifteen. But, first of all, I give this beautiful poem in the original.

VGT DGTG PLYDDYG.

Cty wggd dmlydd stoggwd stogiwd dhu,
 Snt celylltu sordg dy de dymm
 Smolydiog dygion swillt e prw ;
 Stigd oddyw wohgdy stowyd gymm.

Cwn dygywn wddky Odywwg vgd vyd vawr,
 Imtgodyd Lyndinydryd tpw llanwysrsh jydd ;
 Smyddyd og glythyrwyn, syp pywdd mawr,
 Okty smytewtk gwylyt ostygg myt fydd.

Tyblyd dy dwydidyr rhys myddymydiym,
 Plppwd dwyddwdyd lwp ly lattwys dydd,
 Ppwd mydd dyell dyny drod spu odyyyym,
 Llangybby lrybyboydd wrwst ytrybb.

Gydloydydo golwys cwn dyylwd towygg bygg,
 Sum crws doggydwog mwyrstyn dyddyr rhys,
 Beyddars twrs typpl swyydyl onwrst pygg ;
 Dydodym oppws dwysswr dyllydggwg whys.

Lybrypurstdgwyrsburstrog mpps wyg wyr,
 Xyxydryd dyrurst smgrwr swyggbywe ;
 Dyxlypenwrit tygg rhurst rys gdwd lyr,
 Oggdwrst smyx dyrstyd bygws dydlwdd.

Swyxytywr dwyr dgtmwyt odyg dyw cymru,
 Middywwr stygwry omdymordyz wrst ;
 Pyplwdyd dywwyudwy smoxtyr fu,
 Fydyyywgry tyrxy stywnd vrst.

THE COOK'S SUICIDE.

Ben Bobstay was a sailor hold,
 And Betty was a cook,
 And down by Severn's rattling wave,
 A lover's walk they took.

Ben talked about the wedding-ring,
And flung his love-sick spells ;
“ Oh, yes,” says Bet, “ the Lydney’s are
A pretty ring of bells !”

“ If you thus chafe me, Betty dear,
I ’ll wring your nose so true.”
“ Oh ! Ben,” says she, “ shut up your pipe,
Look not so deadly blue.”

“ I cannot change my garment’s dye,
For white, or brown, or black.
Oh ! Betty smile upon my suit,
Go on the other tack.”

“ Oh ! let us then jump in the waves,
Your suit I ’ll never dree.”
“ Agreed,” said Ben : “ but my best coat
All water-logged will be.”

The moaning winds rushed wildly,
With melancholic din,
And Ben, he jumped the waters o’er,
And Betty, she jumped in.

Ben hastened to his eating-house,

A tough steak he had drest ;

Poor Bet, in four cross-roads was laid,

With a stake drove through her breast.

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OCCURRENCE SIXTH.

DEPARTURE OF BILL FROM THE FOREST—AND ARRIVAL
AT A CERTAIN VILLAGE, NEAR THE FAMOUS TOWN
OF CAMBRIDGE.

“ I zoꝝ,” said Hezzy to me, one morning at breakfast,
“ thou be-est got a big lout of a chap—big enough to
yarn thine own living. I cont avord to mointoin thee
any longer ; thou be-est no zon of moine ; thou must
go out in the world and zeek thy vortune, or strap to
with me at the lime burning.”

“ I am not over-fond of the lime business,” said
I ; “ it is first cousin to a chimney-sweep.”

“ Then thou must sweep thyself off these ere pre-
mises.”

“ Very well, Hezzy,” said I, with the utmost *non-
chalance* ; “ Good bye t’ye ! good bye, [Letty !” So
saying, without further circumlocution or ceremony,
I took my leg in my fist, and incontinently marched
out alone into the wide world.

Now, whether Hezzy and Letty thought the whole affair a joke, and expected to see me return again as usual in the evening, I never had any means of ascertaining, as I have never seen them from that time to this ; but this I know, that I considered it no joke, but a *bona-fide* turning out. So on I trudged in the most dogged and determined manner, whistled the "devil among the tailors," cut a caper, and snapped my fingers at old mother Care.

In my hand I carried a stiff oaken cudgel : in my fob I had sevenpence-halfpenny. I had no bundle or encumbrance of any kind, all my personal estate was on my back. Still I was cheerful and joyous ; I thanked my stars I had nothing to lose, as fervently as ever did the contented old lady when she looked out of her window on a bleak winter's morning. My capital was certainly small : I consoled myself, however, with the reflection that many a great personage who looked big on Exchange, and exalted his head even to the stars, had no capital at all. Sobersides on his nag of ten-toes with sevenpence-halfpenny was, after all, a richer and a greater man than Sir Benjamin Bubble, of Bishopsgate Within.

About a fortnight before I commenced my solitary

journey, an itinerant showman had passed through the forest, accompanied by several understrappers, among whom was a pretty black-eyed girl of about my own age. A few love passages passed between us, and I undoubtedly felt a real *penchant* for the maiden. My first object after quitting the forest was to trace out my fair one, and I accordingly used all the means in my power to attain that object. For a long time my researches were fruitless. At length, however, I ascertained that I was on the right trail; and sometimes I arrived at villages through which she had passed only the day preceding my advent. At length I arrived at a way-side inn, not far from the famous town of Cambridge. Notwithstanding I had travelled in the most economical manner, I had reduced my capital to three-halfpence. I entered the inn, however, with a swaggering gait, threw my money on the table with an air of the utmost importance, and ordered something to eat and drink.

“Eat and drink?” inquired the landlord, with a merry twinkling of his right eye, almost amounting to a wink.

“Yes, eat and drink!” said I, surlily: “is there anything odd in eating and drinking after a twenty mile’s walk, eh?”

"And what canst thou expect to have for three-halfpence?" said the landlord: "a pennyworth of bread, a haporth of cheese, and a glass of water with a cinder in it, eh?" And here he burst into an uproarious fit of laughter.

"I tell you what, Mr. Landlord," said I, quite nettled at his supercilious demeanour, "you had better mind your knitting and look to your spiggot: I am not to be trifled with."

At this moment the sound of a drum, echoed from the area in front of the inn, attracted the attention of the landlord, and, perhaps fortunately for me, prevented any further altercation. He hastily left the room, but soon reappeared, ushering into the room the identical showman who had passed through the Forest of Dean a few weeks before, and the black-eyed damsel I had been so long in search of.

The maiden and myself soon renewed our love passages, and no sooner did she see how hard up I was for cash, than she generously added a shilling to my small capital. Notwithstanding, however, she performed this act in the most furtive manner, it was perceived by the showman, who immediately sprang to his feet and demanded back the money,

with horrid imprecations. I refused to refund, and he immediately commenced a ferocious attack upon me with a huge cudgel, and so sudden and unexpected was the attack, that before I could put myself into a defensive attitude I was beaten to the ground, where I lay without sense or motion ; and when I returned to a state of consciousness, the showman, black-eyed girl, drum, and all had disappeared.

OCCURRENCE SEVENTH.

I BECOME A CAMBRIDGE GYP.

I WAS now in a most unenviable condition : battered, bruised, and pennyless. I began seriously to think of taking to the highway, when I accidentally encountered Gerald Dawson, Esq., a Dean Forest magnate, to whom I was not unknown, then a freshman of St. John's College, Cambridge, who, taking pity upon me, hired me there and then as his gyp, or man-of-all-work.

The rooms of Gerald were in the labyrinth of St. John's College, a famous grim old wing, which ever reminded me of the corridors and dilapidated turrets of Mrs. Anne Radcliffe. It was on a fine October evening when I first presented myself before him. He was in his room smoking a cigar. "Bill," said he, as soon as I entered, "take that poker, thrust it into the middle of the fire, make it red-hot, hot as blazes!"

I implicitly obeyed his command, wondering, however, what he would be at.

"Take that bellows down, cut a piece of the handle, then puff away like the devil."

My wonder heightened.

"It will do now : it is as red as old Barnes' nose," said he.

I still kept puffing away.

"Take it out now, Bill, quick ! quick ! and run it into the sofa."

Now the sofa was a magnificent one, in the first style of fashion. I thought he might be joking, and I stood hesitating with the poker in my hand.

"Ram it in !" said he. "Why, you stupid ass, it will get as cold as a fried icicle."

Seeing he was in downright earnest, I thrust the poker into the sofa and made a tolerably decent hole. "Another ! and another !" shouted Gerald ; and he kept me to it till the sofa was metamorphosed into a regular colander.

"That'll do," shouted Gerald : "the sofa is in sufficient order. Now take that carving knife, cut off about three inches from two of the legs of that table, put the poker in the fire again, and when it is red

hot, recollect as hot as a glass of sherry after old Barnes' nose has made it simmer, make a regular good hole in the bottom of each of the chairs."

I obeyed his orders *con amore*. I began to enjoy the joke highly.

"Good," said Gerald, puffing a huge volume of smoke from his cigar. "I shall not now, at all events, be taken for a mollycoddle of a freshman, raw from his mammy's apron-string."

Thinking my duties were finished for the evening, I was about to retire, when Gerald roared after me, "Hollo! stupid! where away, eh? Thy business is not half done yet. Light a candle, take that cap down, burn the tassel, break the trencher."

I did this in a trice, laughing all the while.

"I am now a fifth of November rower, to all intents and purposes. Now, Bill," continued he, "take down my gown, rip off a foot of the tail, the more jagged the better, slit the collar a little,—not too much,—that'll do: now I am a Market-Hill hero, eh?"


I burst into a fit of uproarious laughter.

"That's it, old boy, laugh and grow fat. You were reckoned a bit of a boxer in the forest: reach down that

pair of gloves. Give me the other pair lying on the table. Stand off, sir! fire away!"

We accordingly set to; and I soon found that although I had to do with a yokel, he was no novice. He plied his mawleys in true Mendoza style, and gave me several first-rate nobbers, and paid divers visits to my bread-basket. I, at first, only played with him; but when I saw him so resolute and determined, I returned his favours with interest; and, seizing a favourable opportunity, gave him a smart tap on the jugular, which sent him heels over head into the farther corner of the room.

"You are a good un," said Gerald, springing to his feet, and shaking me warmly by the hand. "You are no slow coach, but up to trap, a slap-up fast man. We shall now draw well together: begone for the night."



OCCURRENCE EIGHTH.

GERALD AND HIS GOVERNOR, AND A COLLEGE PRANK.

A FEW days after, Gerald accosted me with a visage elongated more than usual. "Bill," said he, "who would have thought it?—the governor is coming up: what a bore!"

"You mean the old squire, your father?"

"Who else should I mean? Now, Bill, be off to Simpkin's and borrow his green spectacles and Butler's Analogy: bring them here,—be quick!"

I obeyed his commands with the greatest alacrity, and soon returned with the required articles.

Gerald opened the book, and put on his spectacles. "Bill," says he, "meet the governor at the bottom of the stairs: he will ask how his beloved, hopeful son is: tell him I am a hard reader, much too hard,—eyes injured,—such head-aches: stick it in to him, eh?"

I promised to obey his injunctions to the tittle.

Scarcely were all things arranged, ere the heavy

tread of the old squire was heard ascending the creaking stairs. I met him, drew him aside, and acquitted myself so as to satisfy the most sanguine expectations of Gerald.

"Gerald," said the squire, when he entered the room, "I am happy to hear such a good account of you."

"Glad you approve,—read hard,—had a deuce of a tussle on the ass's bridge."

Here young Hopeful winked at me, and pointed with his thumb in an almost imperceptible manner towards Maudling Bridge, the scene of a desperate row.

"Don't, however, over-read yourself, Gerald, mind that."

"Happy to attend to your admonition in that respect, my dear father: Euclid is tough, Conic Sections tougher still,—my eyes injured."

"Your mother fully expects you to be Senior Wrangler; but even that high honour would be dearly purchased by the loss of your precious health. You look pale and haggard: live better, drink wine."

"Shall be most happy to obey you. Pray send me up a few dozen from the old crypt at home: washy stuff up here."

Here a large portfolio, lying on the table, attracted the eyes of the governor; he took it up and thus proceeded:—

“What the deuce is this? (Reads.)

“‘A dead fag is a man who, from morning till night, crams his cranium with angles, cosines, and tangents, even as a Norwich henwife crams her goose: which turns out the greater goose of the two, Alderman Duodecimo can alone decide.’

“‘A senior wrangler is one who silences his wife’s tongue by superior vociferation.’

“‘A senior op, pronounced by the cockney’s senior hop, is one who bilks his creditors and hops the twig.’

“Suff! nonsense!” ejaculated the squire. “Holloa! here is something worse still. (Reads.)

A SONG WITHOUT A NAME.

When does the soul drink deep of joy,
And its wildest influence prove?
When Barclay’s best, without alloy,
Foams in the cup of love.

When does the soul drink deep of shame,
And clouds roll black within ?
When there's not a bob in the breeches fob
To buy a glass of gin.

By the holy powers, I would not requite
With love the bobless knave :
I'd spurn in despite the ragged knight,
And foot-ball him into the grave.

"Why, Gerald," resumed the squire, "how the deuce came all this trumpery into your portfolio?"

"Relaxation from severer studies, my dear father. When I have been cutting all day at conic sections, cramming two dozen of Euclid's propositions into my dazed pate, pulling at Wood's Mechanics, and almost drowned in hydrostatics, I find it absolutely necessary to relax the too high-strung tension of the mental faculties by turning to studies of an amusing and cheering nature."

"Well, my dear boy," said the squire, "mind these light studies do not gain the ascendancy. Good bye, for the present : I have an engagement with the Vice-Chancellor,—good bye!"

"Good bye!" said Gerald, "and do not forget the wine."

As soon as the squire's back was turned, young Hopeful threw his green spectacles one way, Butler's Analogy another, and burst out into a hearty laugh.

"Popped it into the governor well, eh, Bill? Capitally done—and then the wine!"

* * * * *

Dr. ———, the Master of St. John's College, was quietly seated at breakfast, when the postman thundered at his door with a letter of no ordinary appearance, and sealed with an earl's crest. He opened it in no ordinary haste, and read as follows:—

"The Earl of ——— presents his compliments to the Master of St. John's, and begs he will accept a fine porker, which will be duly forwarded to-morrow."

"A fine porker!" said the amazed doctor: "a fine porker! it is very odd!"

Next morning the doctor's gyp entered in fiery haste, and after sundry grimaces, informed his master that the Blue Boar was hung on the college gates.

"The Blue Boar, indeed!" exclaimed the angry doctor: "'t is a fine porker,—a present to me from the E—— of ———!"

"Beg pardon, sir," said the obsequious gyp, bowing low : " 't is the Blue Boar."

"I can't make head or tail of it," said the perplexed doctor : "bring it here, instantly!"

The gyp evaporated, and quickly returned, carrying in his arms the sign of the Blue Boar.

The doctor sat in his chair speechless with astonishment. At length he began to comprehend the joke which had been played off, and motioned the gyp to retire. A strict investigation was instantly commenced by the doctor and his satellites, and Gerald and myself were proved to be the authors of the achievement. Gerald was rusticated for three terms, and myself dismissed.

A FEW MORE PASSAGES
IN THE LIFE OF
THE ANGLO-CIRCISSIAN.

PASSAGE FIRST.

A SPREE WITH JACK PROSSER.

"THEN it is thy firm opinion that thou would'st have made a first-rate knight of chivalry?" said I to Jack Prosser.

"Sartain, sure," responded Jack.

"A sort of Amadis or Orlando, eh?"

"Lando here, Madis there, and sartain is sartain."

"Would'st have any objection to break a lance with me?"

"Bre-a-king is bre-a-king, and a lance be a lance."

"Then we will have a tourney."

"What kind of a hanimul be a turney?" said Jack, scratching his penthouse.

"Why, a regular good fight, to be sure."

"In course I ull."

"To-morrow, on Allaston's mene, thou on thy spanking donkey, I on Blucher?"

"E'es," replied Jack.

Upon this we separated.

The morning came, a bright summer morning, a morning fit for a spree, or a lark. And truly there was a lark, ascending and piping with all his might. He just disappeared behind a crimson cloud as we appeared on the field on crimson deeds intent. By some means or other our intended tournament had got wind, and hundreds of hardy foresters—men, women, and children—were assembled on the ground; and no sooner did we appear in sight from opposite points of the compass than a deafening shout arose from every part of the field. "Jack Prosser and his wall-eyed donkey for ever!" shouted the Blakeney Hill men. "The Beard of the Forest and Blucher!" shouted the Etloe and Nibley contingents. And there they stood opposite to one another, straining their throats, puffing out their cheeks, and bawling and roaring like so many Trojans.

It was agreed that our lances should be two long ashen-poles, with blunted ends, and that we should run three courses. Jack was dressed in his old cow-skin


waistcoat, long japanned cow-gown, and corduroy breeches. He had forgotten to smooth down his penthouse, and his hair, in thick clusters, stood bolt upright. His looks were fierce and truculent, and he seemed determined to do a deed of dreadful note. His donkey, too, twisted his right ear about most savagely; and, no sooner had taken up his ground, than he sent forth a loud bray of defiance. I was dressed in a bottle-green waistcoat, shining high-lows, white cotton stockings, and black velvet nether integuments. Blucher was in high fig, and cut divers caprioles, and capered about as though mad; and undoubtedly was eager as another *Bucephalus* for the fray.

The ground chosen for the tourney was long and irregular, broken into manifold ruts and gullies, and intersected with a furious quagmire. Two rugged banks arose on each side, which afforded redundant accommodation for the spectators. Miss Scraggs had been unanimously chosen Queen of Beauty, and was seated on a lofty milk-stool at the northern extremity of the lists, drest in full fig, with an enormous bunch of blue ribbons on her stomacher. She looked remarkably well, and showered her smiles around in the most profuse and even prodigal manner.

Old farmer Grimes now gave three terrific touts on a cow's horn, to announce that all preliminaries were adjusted, and that the tourney might commence.


Jack and I instantly commenced our furious career. Blucher caracoled along at a spanking rate, and absolutely devoured the way. Billy, the donkey, likewise put his best leg foremost, and evidently enjoyed the sport as much as any ass, whether quadrupedal or bipedal, could. Jack's lance, however, was not placed properly in rest: he seemed tilting at Sirius rather than at me. Bang, ram-stam, however, we sped along, and were about to close with a thundering shock, when Billy trod in a gullyhole, and capsized head over heels, with a terrible squelch, while Blucher took a flying leap and cleared gullyhole, donkey, and man, like another Childers.

"I be blowed," said Jack Prosser, slowly rising and shaking his wet feathers, "if I do much mire this ere turnee, my bones be all to jellee." "Never mind, Jack," responded I, "try another bout, thou wilt have better luck next time." Jack and Billy limped away, and took up their ground, and Farmer Grimes sounded to the charge; and again we broke out into full



career. Billy, however, who had plainly received rough treatment in the gullyhole, limped along like a broken-legged gosling, and when he got over about one-fourth of the course stood stock still, and, notwithstanding Jack's blows and vociferations, refused to budge a single peg ; and, scorning to take advantage of Jack's defenceless state, I elevated my lance, and sped by with the velocity of a meteor.

Again we took up our ground, and again Grimes sounded the onset. We broke into full career ; and this time Billy, throwing aside his lameness, performed wonders : he absolutely reached the borders of the quagmire ere we encountered ; and here, as before, Jack carried his lance too high, and, after grazing the top of my crown, passed over harmless. Not so mine. I bore it directly at his penthouse, and it encountered it just above the root of the nose (for Jack had no forehead), and bore him over the crupper of his steed, and, after cutting a somerset and a half, he landed in the quagmire, heels uppermost ; and the malicious Blucher, as he passed Billy, uplifted his heels and gave him such a broadsider, that he toppled into the quagmire above his master ; and there they lay rolling and plunging one over the other like a brace of



battling serpents. At length Jack emerged on the opposite side, an absolute pillar of mud, gasping and puffing as though half throttled. "I'm blowed," said he, sending forth his words as though half drowned in pudding, "I'm blowed if I be a gwain to vight henny more : I be a done-er, blowed if I be-ant : my yead be addled,—cuss all turnees, soy I."

"Thou wilt have better luck another time," said I, as seriously as I could.

"No guling, measter Beard," said Jack : "thou be-est a grinning all hover thy vace. Put up thy cow's horn, varmer Grimes ; douce thy rosette, Miss Scraggs ; good bwye t'ye all : a quagmire be a quagmire, and a turnee be a turnee." So saying, Jack mounted Billy, who had just scrambled out of the bog, and shambled off ; and, bursting into a universal guffaw, we broke up and dispersed.

PASSAGE SECOND.

MYSELF AND THE MENDICITY SOCIETY.

I WAS again destitute. It was winter, the frost had set in, a keen biting frost ; and as my frame, through want and attenuation, was particularly sensitive, every blast of the north-east wind blistered and excoriated my skin. The knuckles of my hands were swollen and absolutely black, chilblains overspread my feet, and I could scarcely creep along the sliddery streets.

I wrote to several of my brother clergymen for assistance : many did not reply to my urgent solicitations : some sent curt and unsatisfactory answers. I knew not what to do. The horrors of starvation stared me in the face, and "all my bones stood gaping and staring upon me."

One morning as I was sitting shivering in my unwholesome apartment, cowering o'er an apology for a fire, a heavy, authoritative knock came to my door. It was one of those ominous knocks which strike a

chill upon the hearts of the unfortunate and wretched, and which seem to say, "deep as is thy misery, there is a more profound depth yet reserved for thee!" Without waiting for an invitation, my visitor entered. Misery was depicted on my thin, attenuated countenance: misery peeped forth from every nook and corner and crevice of my wretched apartment. Yet the man who entered seemed neither to be affected by nor to notice any of those things: he was a tall, ungainly made personage, with a hard, suspicious countenance, insolent in demeanour, ungentlemanly, coarse, and even brutal in manner.

"Sir!" said he, "you have been writing various letters to different persons for assistance: I am commissioned to inquire into your case."

"Who commissioned you?" I civilly inquired.

"I shall not answer that question," he replied.

"How then," said I, "can you expect me to answer your inquiries unless I know who directed you to make them? If the person who sent you has a right to interrogate me through you, I will willingly, and to the best of my power, give satisfactory answers."

"I am not here," he replied, "to listen to long

speeches, I have no time ; it will be best for you to take things quiet." He spoke this in a tone of menace.

" You are an entire stranger to me, and you come unasked into my apartment :—that apartment is poor and humble ; yet I ought to be as free from intrusion therein as her Majesty in Buckingham Palace."

" I have the highest authority for the step I have taken."

" Then, I suppose," said I, for a sudden conviction flashed across my mind to that effect, " you are an officer of the Mendicity Society. That society is self-constituted, and an *imperium in imperio* ; the funds are supplied by benovolent individuals for the benefit of the poor ; but the greater portion is appropriated to maintain a set of lazy officials. You go about, not to elicit truth, but to fix a stigma, if possible, on the unfortunate, in order that by so doing you may gain a character for sharpness, and please your mysterious employer."

" I am afraid you are a bad one," said the fellow, with a malicious grin.

" You have no right to assume that," replied I ;
" and up to the present time you have produced

nothing to convince me that you have a right to stand there ; either do so, or leave the room."

With a savage growl he produced the insignia of a constable.

No sooner did I see that the fellow was what he announced himself to be, and that although an humble and perhaps unworthy, yet a real official of her Majesty, than I gave him a succinct statement of my circumstances, neither adding or diminishing therefrom. He took notes of my case, and then, with a sullen, dissatisfied air, left the room.

Suffering poor of the metropolis ! Your case is hard, very hard to be borne : you are destitute and starving : you apply to the rich for assistance, and immediately come under the cognizance of the Mendicity officials, and as a cure for your hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, are hurried off to the tread-mill. " You ask for bread, and are given a stone."

About a week after the visit of the constable, I received a note from the secretary of the Mendicity Society, desiring me to call at their office in Red Lion Square.

I at once determined to keep tryst. I knew not what they were about to do : they might, for aught I know,

cant me into the prison van, and coach me off to Clerkenwell ; but yet, as I was conscious I had done nothing to deserve such cavalier treatment, I hastened onwards. I was determined to brave the lion in his den. I was cold, and hungry, and starving ; yet no sooner did I get to Red Lion Square and its purlieus, than I saw many more cold, and more hungry, and more destitute. I had an apology for shoes on my feet, but many a group, huddled close together for the sake of warmth not attained, had none. It was a cold frosty morning, their bare feet were red and exco-riated, and literally frozen to the ground. On I passed ; shivering, and with a beating heart, knocked at the door of a plain, unpretending looking mansion, and was ushered into a prison-like room, destitute of furniture, except a few dirty-looking benches ranged around.

The first thing that struck me on entering was the insolent, truculent demeanour of the underling officials. They treated the poor devils who had the misfortune to come into their clutches as though they had been so many cattle. I found the room crowded by a set of miserable, half-starved looking objects, huddled together like sheep in a pen. Into the throng I

forced my way, my spirits grievously depressed : I saw myself treated as a common beggar, and my mind at that bitter moment underwent a complete revulsion. I trembled with agony, became as pale as death, and was obliged to lean against the bare wall to save myself from falling.

Again I called resolution to my aid, and gazed around me. The poor creatures who crammed the apartment were evidently (at least many of them) in a state of starvation and disease. All were silent : each seemed to shun companionship and to shrink into themselves. It was to me a dismal sight. The room also was close and fetid ; it was the most miserable hour of my life. I had been on the borders of starvation in Circassia, I had been devoured with malignant fever, incarcerated in the unwholesome prisons of the Inquisition in the Peninsula, yet those sufferings were but as feathers compared to those which now shook my whole soul with uncontrolled agony.

For nearly an hour we were penned together, when an official entered, and a general commotion ensued. A portion of us were ranged in single file up a staircase. I soon saw the object of this movement. At the top of the staircase was the room in which the

superior officers of the society sat to distribute the alms about to be bestowed. Each person was called by name, and ushered into this apartment alone. The person nearest the door was first called upon, and when he left his place it was occupied by the one next in succession. I was unfortunately nearly at the bottom of the staircase, and I was nearly an hour mounting to the top step by step. At length I arrived at the bourne of my exertions, and stood in close contiguity to the mystic door.

At length I was called in. I entered a rather large room, near the centre of which were seated three or four gentlemen with papers and books before them. A green curtain extending across the room hid a large portion of it. I never discovered who or what was behind this singular screen. It had a strange effect upon me, and gave an air of mystery to the whole scene.

I now stood before the table, and the big ones seated thereat. They asked me a few questions, principally relating to my circumstances. At length I found the object of all this complicated proceeding was to receive two sovereigns from a benevolent individual with whom I had been at college. I never

could understand the reason why the money could not have been sent to me by order, or why I could not have simply called for and received it. Assistance bestowed with delicacy affords to the sensitive mind double gratification. However, I took the two sovereigns and speedily evacuated the premises of the Mendicity Society, and small as the donation was, it alleviated many a pang, and rendered bearable many a melancholic hour.

One would have thought that, having ascertained that I was what I had represented myself to have been, and that my story was strictly correct, that they would have persecuted me no more.* Alas, I reckoned without my host. They hunted me about from post to pillar, as though I had been a felon. Nay, even the sanctity of an hospital afforded me no protection. When extended on the bed of sickness,

* I strongly suspect that those worthies get a fee for every inquiry they make, and this will account for their making more than one in my case. I have every reason to believe that the person who hounded on the officer to annoy me as I lay on the bed of sickness—probably of death—was a brother clergyman. Oh ! shame ! shaune !! shaune !!!

racked with one of the most painful diseases incident to humanity, my agonies were still further increased by the presence of one of their officials, and I was within an ace of being discharged ; and if I had been, at that particular point of my illness, I must inevitably have perished.

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PASSAGE THIRD.

THE PAWN SHOP.

I WAS hard up : my last copper expended. I had a few articles which I could not sell, and I determined to pledge them. I had no other means of raising the wind.

I slipped out of my rooms and glided onwards quickly, occasionally throwing furtive glances behind and on each side of me. I fancied every person I met knew on what errand I was bound : I was new to the business, and felt shy and abashed.

The first pawnshop I encountered was in Holborn. In the windows I saw a great variety of articles, watches, bracelets, seals, &c. ; and over and about the door was suspended coats, waistcoats, gowns of all sizes and patterns. I saw several squalid-looking personages in the shop with little bundles in their hands, anxiously waiting their turn. Most of them bore evident marks of want and suffering, both on their

pallid countenances and on their ragged, tattered clothes. I looked in, turned back again, and then walked up and down before the door for several minutes: I could not muster up resolution enough to go in, and place myself on a level with the half-starved objects before me, so I turned aside and passed on.

I passed on into Oxford Street, and about half way up on the right-hand side I saw a splendid-looking shop, the windows of which were absolutely loaded with the choicest articles of jewellery. Surely, thought I, this cannot be a pawnshop, it is too splendid and brilliant by half. A little to the left, however, I saw a narrow dingy-looking passage, like the entrance to Hades, down which curiosity led me to venture. About eight or ten yards down a low-browed, mean-looking doorway opened into a long narrow space, paved with rough flag-stones, from which opened a range of low, narrow, brown, unpainted doors, each leading into a narrow compartment, just wide enough for an ordinary sized man or woman to squeeze in. Each of these narrow dens was occupied by a wretched being having articles to pledge. In front, lay the pawnshop in all its dirty litter and confusion, and several brusque, hard-featured looking men minutely

examining the wretched gowns, coats, and other necessary articles which the half-starved owners were obliged to part with, in order to obtain a little food. There were to be seen old men scarcely able to totter along, aged women palsy-stricken, young half-famished mothers with their little ones clinging to them and screaming for bread, and young girls sent by their parents at home—themselves unable to come, and who here received the first taints of vice from the callous pawnbroker's assistants taking advantage of their destitute condition, to press upon them indelicate proposals. All, all wore an aspect of sorrow and shame. The little compartments being already crammed full, I could not by any means squeeze in, so I turned about, and with slow, unwilling steps passed on.

I could not by any means reconcile myself to entering one of those dingy, forbidding looking dens, and yet what could I do? My stomach was as empty as my pockets. It was verging towards midday, and I had not broken my fast. I passed two or three pawnshops, but could not muster up resolution enough to walk in. I was new to the business, and felt troubled and abashed.

In this dubious state of mind I wandered on for

the space of an hour or more, and found myself in the vicinity of Wapping, near to Gravel Lane. Here I found myself directly opposite a pawnshop of an inferior description: my belly gave an imperative wallop and I walked in.

The compartments for the customers were larger here than in the other shops I had seen, large enough to hold two or three persons without much pressure; but I found five or six or more packed in. Driven on by hunger, I squeezed into the middle of the most decent looking party, notwithstanding their oaths and grumblings. "Thou hast smashed my big toe to a jelly," said a rough, red-nosed costermonger. "And, arrah! and by St. Pathrick, it is kilt and murdered I am: be aisy, ye lousy spalpeen!" shouted a fat, bloated Irishman, giving me a shove which sent me into one corner. Luckily for me, however, I was pushed close to the counter, and in a good position for being served soon. Never before did I see such a scene as I now saw around me. The personages in the same box as myself were evidently drunken, idle, debauched characters, who had already pawned every article of clothing worth pawning; and now stood before me all in rags and tatters, smelling strongly


of gin and tobacco-smoke. In an adjoining box a fight was going on between two floridly-clad nymphs of the *pavé*: oaths and execrations abounded on every side; and glad I was when the broker, having lent me a trifle, I was enabled to quit this little hell upon earth, and to breathe in comparison the sweet air of the streets.

PASSAGE FOURTH.

MYSELF AND THE PUBLISHERS.

I DO not believe that if a second Milton was to arise, and write a second "Paradise Lost," that he could procure a publisher in London.

A London publisher is as inaccessible as the Great Lama of Thibet, and in his den, as absolute as that important personage. An immense number of satellites, in the shape of errand-boys, clerks, counter-men, &c., &c., surround him, and it is almost as great a feat for an author to break through the chained circle, as to storm successfully Gibraltar or Badajoz. But in the supposition that he should prove fortunate in breaking through this triple entrenchment, beyond he will find a sort of Kremlin, desperately and tenaciously defended by the great man's peculiar staff or clique of hack-writers, who vamp up tales, make excursions into foreign lands for the sake of recording their miraculous adventures, and compile histories from



ready-made materials, and through which the most intrepid adventurer will find it impossible to force his way.

In fact, and to speak in plain terms without beating about the bush, every publisher has his own favourite set of writers, with whom he makes a kind of tacit agreement, to give so much money for so much work. It is a kind of contract job, and like others similar, bears evident mark of haste and superficiality, and it appears to me truly wonderful how the public can tolerate in any degree such trashy volumes as are monthly, I may see weekly, emanating from these great steam manufactories of literature.

To one of the great publishers (I will not mention names) I took the MSS. of my "Adventures in Circassia," with a request that he or his reader would look over it, and if his opinion should be favourable, to publish it. I left it with the great man's great man, and in about ten days received the following reply : "Your Adventures are lively and interesting, but they *would* not fill a book large enough for our purpose." It appears, then, from this, that it is not the quality, but the size of the book they look to. If a linendraper was to act on this principle we should have plenty of huckaback, but no linen shirts.

Repulsed in this quarter, I applied to another of these literary autocrats. He took my MSS. in his hand, and surveyed, with a curious eye, the brown paper and packtwine in which it was enveloped; I presume I ought to have wrapped it in satin paper secured with silk thread. At length, after having curiously scanned the MSS.,—I beg pardon, gentle reader, I mean the brown paper and twine,—his opinion of its merits seemed perfectly formed, (and perhaps as just an opinion as he could have formed if he had read it). “Sir,” said he, depressing the corner of his mouth, and elevating his nose, “we have in hand MSS. enough to last us for two years, and it will be fully two or three months beyond that time ere we can even look into your packet: we, therefore, at present, beg leave to decline it,—good morning, sir.” So saying, he turned on his heel, and *exit*.

I, however, was determined not to be put down, so I put on a bold front, and penetrated into the farther recesses of a noted establishment in the West. I left my MSS. (not my “Adventures”) with another publisher’s factotum, and, in about a week, returned for my precious deposit. This time the factotum, not the autocrat himself, delivered the response. “Sir,” said

he, in very bland accents, "Mr. ——— has looked over your work, and it will not do for our publication." Now, be it known to all men by these presents, that the factotum had uttered an enormous lie, for I had placed sundry private marks, and folded the sheets in such a manner, that if it had been read, those private marks and arrangements *must* have been disarranged: they, however, remained precisely as I placed them.

Thus repulsed by the publishers, I resolved to publish them on my own account. The risk was great, as I had only my own unassisted energy to rely on. The speculation, however, succeeded. I soon sold off my "Adventures in Circassia," so I did my "Queer Book," my "Poems and Tales," and "Hunchback's Chest;" all were most favourably received by the public. Emboldened by this success, at the commencement of the present year, I brought out my "Reginald," which, at the moment I am writing, is sold off. It is evident, therefore, that the publishers and Mrs. Grundy are at loggerheads with respect to my writings. Who can decide, when doctors disagree?

PASSAGE FIFTH.

MYSELF AND THE RICH VICAR.

FROM the preceding "Passages" in my life, it may very well be argued that my personal appearance was not in the highest degree courtly. In fact, my coat was worn sadly out at elbow, and my shoes thin in the soles. Yet I put the best face on matters, brushed up my shoes, and patched up my coat. I remembered the adage,—“Nothing displays less pluck than to be poor, and seem poor.”


In a very poor and populous parish in London there resided, as its vicar, an old college acquaintance. In addition to this living, he had another in the country, and besides these two preferments, (either of them sufficient to maintain a frugal person in genteel ease,) he had an evening metropolitan lectureship. His private fortune, likewise, was not to be sneezed at, so that altogether he might be set down as a man well to do in the world. He had a great deal of pomposity

in his manner, and carried his head very high. I do not know how it came to pass, but I paid this important personage a visit. I rang the bell gently,—a kind of hesitating ring,—like a person who doubts the kind of reception he is about to meet with. The door “was opened” by a bouncing maiden, who evidently did not half like my appearance. She ushered me into a small lobby, and there she left me for half-an-hour, in company with two or three paupers, awaiting the crumbs from the rich man’s table. At length, I heard a stately step approaching,—a slow, stately step. “This must be the Great Man himself,” said I, and sure enough it was. In he stalked, with his hands under his coat tails, and his nose prodigiously elevated. “Wickenden,” shouted he, “what brought you here?” “The buss,” replied I, meekly. “Oh, aye,” replied he, a little confused, “I see.” He then turned his back upon me, spoke a few words to the paupers, and having fished out their business, dismissed them peremptorily, and again turned to me. “The buss, ah! aye! I see: very well, walk in here.” He then walked before me into an apartment splendidly adorned with all the appliances and luxuries of fashionable life, all which he ostentatiously pointed out

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to me, occasionally pausing and gazing upon me, to see what effect the magnificent display had upon me. "Wickenden," said he, at length, "a pretty snug berth, eh? Here am I, there are you: we both started in life with the same advantages." These words were uttered in the most pompous manner, accompanied with action the most supercilious: he was evidently reproaching me with my poverty, striving to overwhelm me with his greatness: he expected me to bow down before the Baal of his prosperity. I, however, continued stiff and erect. He was evidently nettled at this. He then turned about, and took up my "Adventures in Circassia," which happened to be lying on the table. "I believe you are the author of this foolish book?" I nodded assent. "It is such men as you," continued he, "who bring disgrace on the church." "Sir," said I, that book has received the praise of men much better qualified to judge than you; and with respect to my poverty, that, when brought on by misfortune, as mine has been, is no disgrace. In worldly goods you certainly have the advantage: your apartments are well furnished and tastefully decorated, but for this, thanks are due to your upholsterer; your clothing

is elegantly fashioned,—for this your tailor is to be applauded ; your dwelling is, I must confess, very fine and ornate,—but for this you ought to thank your architect. You plume yourself on those things, the credit of which belongs to others. Yes, sir, I see, you put your hands in your breeches pockets, I understand that move, you have much fine gold there ; but, reverend sir, permit me to tell you, that gold should not be made the main object of life ; and he who thinks it the principal object mistakes its end and aim. It is true that the larger portion of mankind think like you, but the numerical majority are often wrong. Sir, I am one of the minority on this question, and I rejoice that I am so. How many rich and pampered individuals lived in luxurious pomp, when Burns was starving. Who remembers the rich dolts ? who remembers not Burns ? It is true, I am not a Burns, but I have, nevertheless, written books which have received the praise of many, whose praise is worth having ; and have cheered and delighted many a fireside. It is this I live for. It is true, I have been grievously afflicted, but I am nevertheless happy ; and perhaps it is good for me, that I, from affliction,




have been unable to follow my professional duties, for if I had been able, I might unfortunately have obtained a rich living, and degenerated into a lazy, fat-headed vicar like you. Good morning, sir."

PASSAGE SIXTH.

ME AND MY ADOPTED CHILD.


I HAVE already repeatedly mentioned in my "Passages" that I was an isolated being, alone in the world: nobody to look after me, nobody to care for me. I must confess that this unpleasant state of things was peculiarly irksome and unpleasant to me, for my bosom was naturally full of the gentle affections, and required something to love and cherish. In turning over matters in my mind, the idea of adopting some female orphan child perpetually recurred, and at length acquired such consistency, that I looked about me for some object on which to cast my whole heart. It was requisite that the object of my love should be as isolated as myself, with no one to share that affection which I resolved to appropriate wholly and solely to myself. The whole scheme was highly poetic, and marked another strange phase in the curious character of the Anglo-Circassian.



Well, I looked about hither and thither, peered so earnestly at divers little ones in the parks, that many a pretty nurse-maid thought I had designs, not upon the pretty blue-eyed child she carried, or led, but on herself. At the southern extremity of St. James's Park there was a secluded seat, overshadowed by an elegant juniper tree. It commanded a view of a large level piece of green sward; and on the right hand glittered the ornamental waters, covered with ducks, swans, and wild-fowl. That seat was a great favourite with me. Hundreds of pretty curly-headed children might be seen from it on a summer's evening gambolling amid the flowers, feeding the ducks and swans, which would come forth from their natural element and snatch the crumbs of bread from their rosy fingers. To me, who was ever fond of studying character, these summer evenings were white epochs in my somewhat melancholic life. Each child, as she trundled the hoop, or lost the ball, or kissed in the ring, displayed the germs of her future character; and the bell-like, merry shouts of laughter emanating from those joyous little ones, unknown as yet to sorrow, as they plied their respective exhilarating sports, imparted a kind of kindred joyousness to me, and made me often forget the carking cares of life.

Among those children there was one who seemed to take a particular fancy to me. She was blue-eyed, rosy-cheeked, and had teeth as white as ivory. If she broke her hoop, she would bound with it to me, and, with an earnest smile, ask me to mend it; if she lost her ball, she would sorrowfully entreat me to seek it for her; and I never denied her innocent requests. We got very great cronies indeed. All of a sudden, however, she disappeared from the park, and I saw her no more.

To make up for this disappointment, however, about this time I accidentally met with the widow of a deceased favourite nephew of mine. She had a daughter about ten or twelve years of age, warm-hearted and affectionate, but wayward and thoughtless. From the first time we met we took a fancy to each other. She loved me as a father, I loved her as a child. She resided at that time at L——, on the borders of E—— Forest; and I cannot easily forget how fond and delighted I was to stray with her amid its romantic glades. It perpetually reminded me of my dear old native forest, and the days of my youth seemed to have returned. Every furze-bush with its golden blossoms, every simple forget-me-



not with its softened tints of blue, every lay from the joyous thrush, or the hermit blackbird, were links uniting me to by-gone times. But my dear child Bessy was the master-link of all: her voice ever reminded me of the sweet-toned voice of my long-lost sister (her grandma), her looks of that favourite nephew, reposing for ever under the golden sun of India. In the morning and in the evening I was surrounded with sweet-woven remembrances of the past. Every hour I grew fonder and fonder of my little pet. Recollect, gentle reader, she was the only treasure that remained to me, the only tie that bound me to life.

I had cleared about £150 by my Poems and Tales: it hung heavy in my pockets; and, with the *naïveté* of a poet, I thought it inexhaustible. I took expensive lodgings in the immediate neighbourhood of the forest, sent Elizabeth to school, and gave her masters in drawing, music, singing, French, &c., &c.; and it was truly wonderful to see how rapidly she progressed in her various studies. The more she had to do the more she would do: her mind was large and capacious, intuitively developing the most intricate conceptions; and if she had one faculty overweighing

the others, it was the meteor-like rapidity with which she penetrated into the characters of those introduced to her, and the ever true estimate she formed of their mental powers.

My £150 rapidly dwindled under the divers calls made upon it by this pet of mine: it sunk to a hundred, to eighty, to fifty. The fascinating jade was extravagant in the extreme: her calls upon me were incessant: frocks, rings, chains, and all the paraphernalia of a lady's boudoir were showered upon her. She got completely my mistress. She could twist me round her finger, and do what she pleased with me.

I shall not easily forget (shall I ever?) how delighted I was when she returned home after her day's absence at school,—how gloriously happy I was when she beamed on me like the sun with her joyous smiles, and stole, like a ministering angel, on my solitary wretchedness.

My £150 "grew small by degrees, and beautifully less." And now the thought began, whether or no, to intrude upon my mind—"what will you do, sir, when it reaches its minimum, its evanescent point?" I mused on this subject as I walked in the forest glades ;

I mused on it for many an hour in the solitude of night : I could not rest, I could not sleep, I could not bear the idea of parting from my pet for ever ; and yet, what could I do ? At length this perpetual anxiety began to affect my health : I grew nervous, thin, and attenuated. I could not eat, I could not sleep : my days and nights were days and nights of anxious solicitude, nay, of absolute piercing agony.


A circumstance now occurred which set the seal to my unlucky spree. I discovered accidentally that it was a misnomer to call Elizabeth my adopted child ; that she was solely and wholly under the guidance of a Catholic priest, and herself a rigid Catholic. This discovery stuck into my very marrow and bones ; and my illness increased to such a degree that I was obliged to seek medical assistance, and for that purpose called on my old friend T. B. Curling, Esq., at the London Hospital. Here I was obliged to stay : I was absolutely unable to return to my lodgings at L———. I, however, wrote to the schoolmistress of that place, mentioning my illness, and consigning Elizabeth to her temporary care.

Here, then, was my fine air-built castle dissolved and blown to the four quarters of heaven. Instead

of courting the invigorating breezes, and enjoying the sights and sounds of the forest, I was extended on a bed of sickness, suffering every moment the most excruciating pains, both mental and bodily, in a close-packed ward full of mephitic vapours, and resounding with the cries of anguish and groans of despair. How I survived that horrible period is to me perfectly wonderful; but I did recover; and I shall never forget the tide of joy I felt, even to my heart's core, when I was once more enabled to leave my sick couch, and to breathe the free air of heaven. It was emphatically a resurrection from the dead.

With respect to my adopted child, (qy.) I found that, throwing off all disguise, her mother and the Catholic priest had taken her away from school. Where she now is I know not, but I have no doubt but what she will be badgered to take the veil.

The moral to be deduced from this "Remarkable Passage" is, "that expensive adjuncts, as *bond fide* daughters are to an establishment, adopted ones are much more so; and the man who takes to himself such a costly luxury should carefully weigh beforehand the gold and silver he has at command."



MY WHAT-NOT.

100

100

100

DEDICATION.

MY DEAR BILL PROCTOR,

Inasmuch as thou, oh, Bill Proctor, didst initiate me into the mysteries of the fistic art, and didst teach me how to deliver a right-handed facer, pay visits to the bread-basket, tap the claret, pound the proboscis, administer pepper, fib, get the cranium in chancery, and execute a cross-buttock scientifically; for all and each of these reasons, I cannot do less than inscribe this portion of my veritable book to thee.

Dear Bill, do get thy breeches patched. I have heard many of my brother foresters utter disparaging remarks on the dilapidated condition of thy nether integuments. I am sure Miss Scraggs would insert a stitch or two gratuitously if representations were made to her in a suitable manner. Pray, my dear Bill, take this vital matter into serious consideration; I feel considerable anxiety on a subject of such fundamental importance.

Dear Bill, thy voice puts me in mind of the broken drone of an asthmatic bagpipe; what the deuce can

possess thee to be always volunteering, "If I had a donkey wot wouldn't go," &c., &c., in company? It is very singular, Bill, that men and even women pride themselves ostentatiously on that feature or quality which most disfigures them. Thus Tom Burton, with a nose shaped like a powder-horn, and as red as a radish, prides himself on his nasal promontory. Bet Stiggins, with a leg as big as a mile-stone, and a foot as broad as a platter, prides herself on the beauty and grace of her pedestals. Dick Trotter, with a mouth as wide as a barn-door, is in ecstasies on the peculiar symmetry of his oscular apparatus; and Sam Briggs, who erects ears as elongated as the ears of a donkey, causes his hair to receive an extra crop in the aural regions, in order that his auriculars may be fully exposed to the admiring gaze of the public. I could easily multiply examples, but I have advanced a sufficient number fully to illustrate the matter in hand.

Again, therefore, I exhort thee, oh, Bill Proctor, to cut "If I had a donkey wot wouldn't go," and to get thy breeches mended, and I shall ever remain,

Thy faithful friend

And sincere well-wisher,

GHERIE, THE ANGLO-CIRCISSIAN.

MY WHAT-NOT.

THE NOTHINGNESS OF MAN.

I stood upon a lonely sea-girt isle,
A crumbling mass of mingled spars and rock,
Thrown from the centre of old earth the while
Her vexed heart shivered with volcanic shock ;
And black and bare amid the waves it stood,
Throwing defiance on the battling flood.

No flowers or sunshine graced the lonely vales ;
No summer clouds their cooling shadows threw ;
A thick, black, stifling fog oppressed the dales ;
And strangling upas-trees disordered grew,
Flinging their shafts of death profusely round,
Driving all life from that polluted ground.


Stern frowns all heaven the lightnings hissing sweep,
Splitting the dome of yon cathedral cloud.

Down down it topples, booming to the deep,
Clasping the thunders in its lurid shroud ;
And the mad waves of the up-heaving ocean
Simmer and clash amid the stern commotion.

I stood alone, no man nor life was near :
Alone with my own heart, mid nature's throe,
I ever loved to see the storm career,
Bursting and thundering, rending all below.
'Tis then my soul, all joyous, wildly springs,
And rides triumphant on her murky wings.

Man and his nothingness then rise to view,
In contrast stern to Nature's might and power.
The lightnings, with wing'd arrows, pierce him through ;
The waves, with hissing scorn, his works devour.
Yon ship, his noblest work, lies on the sand,
A broken plaything in a giant's hand.

The crew, in clusters, squatter on the wave,
Gasping and struggling with convulsive cry ;
Now sinking throttled to a briny grave.
" The noblest work of God !" Oh, vanity !
" Man and his marvels !" silly, foolish pride !
Look at the debris of yon sweltering tide.



What a wild shout ! it rends the azure sky,
 Battling and rattling like a thunder peal.
The stately hills with echoing voice reply,
 Their craggy summits seem to shake and reel.
" Napoleon ! Napoleon !" with wild acclaim,
A million voices thunder o'er the plain.

Napoleon—the hero, conqueror, king
 Of prostrate nations—with a nod and frown,
Like puissant Jupiter, could the wide world fling,
 In trembling chaos, topple empires down.
A very demi-god he moved along,
With upturned eyes flouting the grovelling throng.

Myriads of sabres round him proudly flash ;
 A sea of pennons undulate in air ;
Thousands of horsemen onward fiercely dash,
 Cannons and carbines with malignant glare,
And thundering echoes pour their iron woes ;
A cloud of blood enshrouds him as he goes.


And Moscow, with her stately, kingly towers,
 Feels the fell influence of the giants' sway.

A sea of lurid flame impetuous pours,
Sweeping cathedrals, palaces away ;
And earth and heaven, amid the bitter ire,
Seems mingled, shrivelled by that world of fire.

He stood where once that princely city stood,
And scanned triumphantly the ghastly scene.
His foe lay prostrate ; o'er that field of blood,
Beyond the reach of eye his banners gleam.
Proud was his gait, elated was his brow ;
" Proud northern Czar, I have enchained thee now."

The winds burst wildly from the farther north,
From the ice palace of the queen of frost ;
The pestilence let loose, went maddening forth,
Raging and hurling, blighting, tempest tossed.
Napoleon, the demi-god, where now thy boast ?
Where now the myriads of thy countless host ?

Ask stern Smolensko, Berezyna ask,
Where piles of bloated corpses taint the air ;
Where the choked river, in its ice-bound mask,
Hides sever'd heads, and limbs grim festering there ;



And cries of woe and shouts of death around,
And shatter'd banners clog the blood-trode ground.

The Frost Queen governs all : huge drifts of snow
Hurtle and whirl amid the deafening peal
Of unchained hurricanes, which thundering go,
Causing all heaven and earth to shake and reel.
Napoleon's host, all shivering, onward creep,
Like drifted weeds tossed on the restless deep.

Now, from the bosom of yon snowy cloud,
A shivering wretch emerges, ghastly pale,
And leaden-eye as in a coffin'd shroud,
Cowering, shrinking, 'neath the ice-winged gale.
Is that Napoleon, the God, we see ?
The storm with mocking voice peals forth—" 'tis he !"

A peal ! a peal ! now thunders o'er the deep :
Another demigod,* the world's applause
Hang on his words, as with majestic sweep
He fashions eloquent a nation's laws.
Like the majestic sea his periods glide,
In music onward with resistless tide.


* Sir Robert Peel.

His heart was with his country, and he loved
To see her hills and vales with plenty clad.
The poor man blest him, and the rich man proved
His sterling patriotism, and at heart was glad
To join the fervent, world-wide earned acclaim,
That lifted e'en to the heavens the statesman's name.

Now, on yon fatal hill, I see extended
A shapeless mass, all motionless and maimed ;
Those lips—so eloquent, with the stained dust blended,
For ever closed :—the applause, so justly claimed,
Will ne'er again its joyous balm impart,
Nor break in sweetness on that throbless heart.

Then what is man, and what the tinsel state?
All the fine gauds which mock the dazzled eye
Of insect man, the trappings of the great?
Like the gilt pinions of the butterfly ;
And summer gossamers are children's dreams,
Will-o'-the-wisps, dangerous deceptive gleams.

Death conquers all : the envied power of kings
Must yield submissive to the icy grave ;




Like thistle-down, which each breeze discourteous flings,
Are all ; the monarch and the trampled slave,
The brow all diadem'd, the humble clown
Must with the slimy grave-worm low lie down.

I, in my cottage, with my books and flowers,
Wish not to change my state—let kings strut by—
I'm happier far, amid my rural bowers,
Than tho' hedged round with their mad panoply.
Mayhap I'm greater too : a conscience pure
Points to those golden realms which will for aye endure.

A PATHETIC TALE.

AFTER THE MANNER OF F—— AND L——.

It was a most terrible storm,—terrible beyond imagination to describe. The thunder roared, the lightning flashed, the waves rose in mountainous ridges to the very sky, and the sun was blinded with the spray. Two ships were careering along under a press of sail; one of them (wondrous to behold!) directly in the teeth of the wind, the other scudding before it. Both ships are now on the extreme top of two mountain waves. There they lay rocking, balancing themselves like eagles about to pounce upon their prey; and now both begin to descend into the trough of the sea, swifter and swifter they rush down the watery cliffs; they now meet with a horrible crash, and the ship careering in the teeth of the roaring winds splits the other in two from stem to stern, clean and smooth, as though the work had been done by an experienced sawyer. Down goes the severed ship! yes, down she goes with a headlong lurch, or rather two lurches,




and her crew lay squattering and shrieking, and struggling on the yeasty waves: all miserably perished; yes, all! all! except Billy Blinn, the boatswain's mate.

Blinn was a swimmer of the first water,—a ponderous man, but yet a good swimmer: he beat a pound-weight by ten degrees. Billy rode like a dolphin over the dark rolling waves: oftentimes he was tumbled head over heels, but still he struggled on; but, alas! he gets weaker and still weaker! He sinks! he sinks! At this trying moment, who the deuce should appear but Arion on his dolphin. "Will you have a ride?" says Arion. "Sartainly," says Blinn, "and wery thankful into the bargain, specially if thou hast any grog in thy locker." So saying, he mounted on the back of the dolphin, and on, on they go, ploughing swift as a steam-engine the yeasty waves; the dolphin certainly was restive, and oftentimes lashed out furiously behind. The sagacious creature knew and felt that Blinn on his back was no joke, no illusion, but a regular dead weight; still he goes swiftly onwards. But what is that terrible bellowing in front,—that (I repeat it) terrible bellowing in front, as if all the bulls of Bashan were congregated, and roaring together? What should it be but a huge,

lofty, Alpine-breaking wave coming forwards with gigantic strides, hissing and rolling and foaming, foaming and hissing and rolling. The dolphin loudly snorts, Arion looks alarmed, and Blinn turns his quid. On, on comes the terrific, terror-breathing billow ram-stam, and whither it rushes bang against the dolphin, over he rolls, off goes Billy Blinn, and with a spang and a snort off goes the dolphin, leaving his riders to their briny tears and tears of brine.

Down goes Billy, and up goes Billy, and down he goes again. The waves make no bones of the bones of Billy. He is driven hither and thither at their wild will : he now floats senseless, helpless, like tangled sea-weed on the very crest of a stupendous billow. He is thrown far up upon the shore, and the merciful waters have spared the beautiful Blinn.

Yes, he is thrown far on the beach of the sandy cove ; but not so far but that the water-bells and sea-foam dash around him, waving his long pig-tail to and fro, and dabbling it with sand and tangle. Long, long he lay in a state of utter unconsciousness. At length he slowly revived, and crawled up the beach : he strove to arise, but staggered, and again fell prostrate. He was cold, shivering, and almost dying.



He crept into a deep recess, overshadowed by intermingled wild-rose and strawberry trees, and floored by long silky grass starred with dandelions. He strived to gain a little respite from the piercing cold by nestling snugly in the long grass, but the rains descended, and the winds blew. His frail covering was now pierced through and overwhelmed, and again he relapsed into a state of utter unconsciousness.

He knew not how long he remained in a state of insensibility ; but the first distinct idea that possessed his mind was, that some person was tenderly chafing his hands, and wringing the sea-water from his long, dripping hair. He thought, too, he heard a sweet silver voice utter low murmuring accents of pity. He endeavoured to lift his head, but it fell back again on his grassy couch ; again he strove, and with more success. He looked anxiously around him, but no living being met his ardent gaze. He was lost in utter astonishment. He assuredly felt the tender hand chafe his temples, he distinctly heard the silvery-sweet accents of the voice. It could not be an illusion, it was too plain and palpable.

He sat up, the sun shone, the birds chanted their fairy-linked melodies, the gaudy insects fluttered in

the glittering sunbeams, the flower-cups murmured with the soft undersong of the honey-bee, but poor Billy was still alone, cut off from the world. What remains for him but miserably to perish ?

Billy had now been two days without food, his steps grew weak and languid, his cheeks pale, and his form attenuated. Two more miserable days rolled on, hunger parched his throat and racked his frame with intolerable agony ; the fountain of life seemed fast drying up, and Blinn lay down to die.

Suddenly, beautiful music floated around him. It seemed as though hundreds of fairy harps had broke forth at once into one mingled inextricable strand of soul-ravishing melody. It breathed from the clouds, from the sea, from the woods. All nature seemed steeped, absorbed in harmony. It breathed and floated everywhere !

It was like one of those sweet gushes of harmony, one of those beatific visions which oftentimes soothes the departing spirit when about to flit away to blessed worlds beyond the skies !—visions which give the rapt participant a foretaste of heaven !

The music might be visionary, but not so the events which followed. He heard a soft sigh, and felt a

warm, tender hand applied to his heart. "Thank God!" said the same sweet silver voice he had before heard, "poor Blinn still breathes!" The same soft, tender hand was now applied to, and gently lifted his drooping head, and a cordial, bearing renovating life on its wings, was poured down his throat, yes, poured down his throat, wings and all. Again he was gently laid on his grassy pillow; a genial warmth shot through his frame, the blood again mantled in his cheeks; again he opened his eyes, and sought the ærial visitant; again she was gone, vanished like a dream of the night.


Billy was lost in utter amazement. He sat up and rubbed his eyes; he could scarcely convince himself but what it must have been a dream. He was still doubting, and doubting on, when, casting his eyes on the green sward before him, he saw spread out a delicious banquet. Butter and biscuits, a slice of salt pork, and six glasses of double grog formed a portion, and a portion only, of the delicate feast.

"Surely," said the bewildered Billy, "I am in the land of enchantment! surely I am become the pet of some benevolent fairy! The silver voice, the heavenly music, are not the illusions of the imagination.

But why, oh ! visitant of celestial bowers, not appear to me in thine earthly form ? why not let mine eyes gaze on thy transcendent loveliness, for surpassingly lovely, I am well convinced, thou must be ? Why grant me life, and the means of life, and still withhold what I am persuaded can alone render life valuable, thine own lovely self ?”

Another strain of transcendently delicious music again floated around him. The youth gazed towards the azure skies, from whence the stream of harmony seemed to flow. He distinctly saw a beautiful nymph, of heavenly and radiant beauty, disappearing behind the topmost crag of the cove. She was seated in a car of exquisite beauty, and she was playing on a three-stringed silver lyre. To the astonished Billy the car seemed to float in air : slowly and majestically it floated on ; slowly and majestically it vanishes by degrees : now he sees only the flutter of a white robe, and a long ringlet of black, glossy hair streaming in the air ; and now he sees only the slow, rolling folds of a crimson cloud.

The pork, the biscuits, the grog are all gone, evaporated, and Billy is on the confines of the grave ; but yet he is conscious of all things that passes around him.



Can it be real? Is it not an illusion? Is not that a graceful car, and a still more graceful occupant, in bright relief against the azure sky, and slowly descending? Does not melting melody again steal around, as those white taper fingers gracefully sweep the silver lyre? Yes; but now those blue celestial eyes gaze with a pitying expression on the prostrate Blinn, and the heavenly melody ceases abruptly. Crystal tears slowly fall forth, and plash, one by one, from those long silken lashes. "Oh, cruel, cruel Biddy!" said the heavenly visitant; "thy culpable delay has been fatal, and the poor youth is no more." Rapidly she bounded from her car, flew rather than ran to the dying Blinn, again raised his drooping head, again poured the revivifying cordial down his throat, and she wept, yes, she wept bitterly: two tears plashed on the eyelids of Billy, and one on the tip of his nose!

Again Billy revives, again the heavenly visitant flits, vanishes away in her celestial car, and is speedily hidden from the longing sight of Billy.


Blinn was now mad with love, mad with curiosity. Who could the heavenly visitant be? A fairy, angel, or Venus herself? Billy determined to solve the mys-

tery : he pretended to be very 'ill, and lay down on the sandy cove as though to die.

Suddenly music breathed around, and the car again descended, bearing in its glittering bosom the angelic visitant. It was an oval-shaped car, and the feet of the fairy or angel, or whatever it might be, dangled over the sides, and Blinn perceived they were of truly elephantine proportions, especially the feet, which appeared large and broad enough to cover an acre of ground. The car now touched the ground, and Billy closed his eyes ; the nymph approached with heavy splashing steps, she gently raised his head. " Now, or never !" roared Billy, and grasped his visitant by the waist. Who should it be but Biddy Brallaghan, the famous Wapping oyster woman, bearing a bottle of the winged cordial (gin) in her dexter hand !

" Biddy !" shouted Blinn, " what brought you here ?"

" Oysters !" sighed Biddy. " My son Toby lets me down in the dredging-basket every day to get oysters. Here, Billy, my boy, have another sup of gin ; it will do you good."



A LAY OF THE DEVIL.

"COME, ladies and gentlemen, one and all,
Oh ! take a ride with me,
For I am bound to the Devil's Hall,
His wonderments to see."
"Bard of the Forest ! we will not roam."
"Then stay and vegetate at home."

Forthwith I mounted my Pegasus,
A regular piebald spanker ;
And through the clouds we pranced away,
And at Maelstrom came to anchor.
Rough was my steed, rough was the weather,
I got wet through, and lost much leather.

Now, Maelstrom is a muddy hole,
In slime and mud abounding :
Aye kicking up, without control,
A thundering roar astounding,
And making no bones of sucking in
A ship, and all her freight within.

Now that is the porch to the Devil's house,
In architecture strong ;
There he, perdue, snug as a mouse,
Lies basking the whole day long,
Gulping hot lead by way of gruel,
Burning old maids by way of fuel.

The dome is a copper inverted kettle,
Stolen from the western rail,
Sustained by pillars of red-hot metal,
Which ocean to bend will fail.
Paxton " must hide his diminished head,"
When he views those pillars so strong and red.

Some say the Devil has a tail,
Right palpable to see,
But I looked east, and I looked west,
But the devil a tail has he ;
But in lieu a tunic of asbestos
That reaches to the knee.

The Devil has a gimlet eye,
And only one has he :
A horn stuck on his forehead high,
Like any Pharisee :

A mouth of flame, a nickel chin,
And teeth of iron champing within.

“ Good morrow, my boy, my gallant boy,
I ’m truly wholly thine !”
(Says the Devil to me,) “ then quick dismount,
And enter my hall and dine.
Your steed looks fagged,—not to affront her,—
And you as hungry as a hunter.”

“ Sir Devil, I thank you from my heart
For your kind invitation.”
He shook his horn with galvanic start,
And grinned his approbation.
“ Lead on,” quoth I, with visage fell ;
Forthwith we entered the gates of hell.

Six imps before a rousing fire,
Were cooking various dishes,
And drinking brimstone by the pot,
Like thirsty Afric fishes.
Then down we sat at a table long,
Forthwith fell to, heigho ! ding-dong !

The Devil swallowed a tailor,
A cobbler and his awl,
And made no bones of a sucking-pig,
Malgre his hideous squall.
Then turned him to a parson big,
And bolted him, his gown and wig.

The Devil swallowed the Hatless,
That stupid hum-drum wit ;
But Blinn, the Critic's critic,
He found too tough a bit :
So he cast him into an oubliette nigh,
With his brother muck-worms to stink and die.

He tried to gulp Napoleon
With vigorous pull and stash,
But he could get no farther
Than the grinning ape's moustache ;
So turned to Mr. Thiers hard by,
And gurgled him down like a pigeon-pie.

He strove to swallow Haynau,
But a bone stuck in his throat ;

And he began to keck and wheeze
Like an half-strangled stoat.
Up I jumped, and with a whack
Struck him full butt upon his back.

Out flew the bone all swiftly
With a prodigious stour,
O'erthrowing fifty fat priests,
And knocking down a tower.
The Devil sat down with a visage red,
And swallowed a barrel of molten lead.

Says I unto the Devil,
"You've made a capital dinner,
Higher by ten degrees your horn,
As I'm a blessed sinner."
Then up he jumped, with a growl and yell;
"Saucy dog," quoth he, "thou shalt stay in hell!"

I put myself in an attitude,
Like any Spring or Cribb,
And planted in his bread-basket
A most enormous dig.

The Devil returned, and we rattled away,
And fought for the whole of a summer's day.

I administered much pepper,
And many a merry stinger,
And in his throat and on his ear
Popped many a fistic ringer,
Till he began to blow and stare,
Twisting his daylight here and there.

Then I went in to finish,
And smote him off his pegs :
He rolled about, and strove to rise,
But couldn't regain his legs.
Then with a laugh, and a loud "hurray!"
I mounted my steed, and "on and away!"

A TALE OF HORROR!

AFTER THE MANNER OF A-B-R.

STEFANO RINALDI was the illegitimate son of a Romish priest, who resided in a solitary monastery not many miles from the city of Palermo, in Sicily. He was of a dark, moody, and wayward disposition, yet enthusiastic withal; and it is probable that the gloomy objects which surrounded him had more than their due influence in forming his youthful mind. Mouldering battlements, long, resounding corridors, gliding monks in their dark, flowing habiliments, were the only things he knew of life and life's appliances. It is true the presence of a few emaciated, pale-faced nuns might sometimes break in upon the dull monotony of his irksome existence; but then it was only occasionally that even that relief (if relief it could be called) presented itself, and then only in transient glimpses, as the sisters went in mournful procession to matins or vespers.

As he was one day pacing up and down the eastern aisle of the chapel of the monastery, he saw, hastening to the confessional, a tall, stately nun, who, from her elastic tread, appeared to be in the prime of youth. She was so closely veiled, that not the smallest portion of her features could be seen. He, however, noticed, with surprise, that the person of the unknown female, from the waist upwards, was of an almost supernatural length. It seemed as though two bodies were piled one upon the other, supported by one pair of legs. The singular appearance of the nun, from the very first, excited the wondering curiosity of Stefano; and he often waylaid her, often crossed her path, in order that he might, perchance, catch a casual glance of her scrupulously concealed countenance. Vain, however, were all his endeavours: he could not get even a glimpse of a solitary eyelash.

At length curiosity bore down all other considerations, and he determined to accost the mysterious nun the next time she went to the confessional. As soon as she made her appearance, he went up to her, and besought her to unveil, if only for a moment. "Foolish youth," said she, "do not desire me to do what would turn thee into a pillar of stone: leave

me." The youth was horror-struck at the sepulchral cadence of the voice ; it seemed as though a demon had spoken from the vampire tomb. But this was not all which startled him : the voice seemed to proceed from the breast, not from the mouth of the speaker. An undefined terror shook the frame of the shivering youth, and he leant against a pillar of the church to prevent him from toppling headlong on the marble floor.

He still lay in a half unconscious state on the dark floor when the nun returned from the confessional. She did not perceive the prostrate youth, and her veil was partially undrawn ; and Stefano saw, with augmented horror, a ghastly countenance, on which every despicable and terrible passion was legibly imprinted ; and that countenance glared from the bosom : yes, from the bosom of the mysterious nun ! Stefano uttered a wild shriek and fainted.

When Stefano returned to a state of consciousness, the nun was kneeling beside him, bathing his throbbing temples with cooling water. Her bosom was doubly and trebly veiled. The ghastly countenance was no longer to be seen ; but how was he surprised to see, in its proper position, one of the most lovely countenances it was possible to conceive !

He was about to speak, but no sooner did the nun perceive his intention than she rose abruptly and glided out of the chapel.

What could be the meaning of this? Beauty and ugliness in the same mysterious being! Ugliness unparalleled! beauty without a peer! Stefano was bewildered, his heart wildly throbbed, he reeled with horror!

Weeks rolled away, and Stefano every day, at the self-same hour, hovered about the path of the mysterious nun. He was in love, madly in love; and yet that love was intermingled with an undefined sensation of horror. His heart, excited by the same anomalous being, was drawn and repelled by contrary irresistible powers. It was almost drawn asunder.

It was a dark November evening as Stefano was walking up and down an obscure aisle of the monastery chapel. He was pale, moody, and agitated. The mysterious nun had studiously avoided him whenever he attempted to cross her path. He was driven almost mad by repeated disappointments.

On the present occasion, however, she deviated from her usual course, and glided with noiseless steps to the very spot on which he was standing. "Stefano," said

she, in that hoarse and sepulchral voice which had formerly harrowed up the very soul of the daring youth, "your persecutions grow intolerable: what want ye? why do you so constantly beset my path?"

"I love thee," replied Stefano, kneeling at her feet. "I love thee, madly love thee! I wish thee to requite my love." "Knowest thou who thou lovest?" inquired the nun. "The most beautiful of all beings!" replied the youth. The nun uttered a loud discordant laugh, which echoed and re-echoed amid the antique carvings of the roof of the chapel like mocking voices of innumerable demons. "Beautiful!" said she: "foolish boy, look! and behold!" So saying, she raised her veil, and revealed to the shuddering eyes of the youth, the same horrible countenance he had before seen, but now ten times more appalling and loathsome than before: it was a regular Gorgon's head; and Stefano, as though transformed to stone, fell lifeless on the floor!

When the youth returned to a state of consciousness, he heard the murmur of a sweet-toned and well-known voice proceeding from the confessional. Urged on by an irresistible power, he crept stealthily along the aisle, and even into the confessional itself. Before him

knelt the nun, and he again gazed with the intensest admiration on the wonderfully beauteous countenance which had, from the first sight, made such strange havock in the very core of his heart. Her bosom was veiled and double veiled; but yet, despite of the thick folds, he fancied he perceived the rude outlines of the demon visage it sought to conceal. She was in the full tide of confession, and the countenance of the priest bore an expression of profound horror.

"I am," said she, "the child of a murderer and a perjured nun! I am, and was, a monster from my birth, an hydra-headed monster! I am deficient in that loveliest part of the female figure, the bosom, and in its stead glares the exact, horrible countenance of the murderer, my father! The countenance of the perjured nun, my mother, is that which thou now gazest on."

Stefano heard no more: he uttered a loud shriek, and fell forward on the confessional lifeless!!

A LAY OF THE SEA.

I SAT upon my bottom,
And looked into the sea,
And though I strained my eyeballs,
No bottom could I see.

It was just where we cross the line ;
The weather was main hot :
I threw the line into the sea
To hook some fish for pot.

I saw a shark pursuing,
The truth I now must tell ye,
This lawyer of the boisterous wave
Had an aldermanic belly.

No wonder ! for, by'r lady !
This eve at seven o'clock
He gulped Tom Baggs, that tough old salt,
Him of the Ingy Dock.

Poor Tom was sitting jauntily

 All snug in the lee scupper ;

The ship gave a lurch, and over goes Baggs,

 For the lawyer a dainty supper.

The lawyer ploughed in the wake of the ship,

 And wide awake was he,

He snapped at my bait—a barber's block,

 And swallowed it eagerly.

And then he strove to break away,

 And floundering splashed amain ;

But though his fangs were sharp and long,

 He couldn't snap the chain.

“ Ben Brimble, lend a hand, my boy,

 And quickly douse your quid,

To land this lawyer and his brief :

 Be brief.”—Ben Brimble did.

The shark was landed on the deck,

 He wriggled and twisted sore,

And a knocking and thumping came from his belly,

 Like knocking at a door.

“ Ye lazy lubbers, let me out
Of this ere filthy hell !”
Said a voice from the midriff of the shark,
In accents stern and fell.


“ We have caught the devil !” the sailors cried,
And quickly ran away :
Some perched on the topmast, and some on the yards,
Some clung to the mainstay.

“ Ben Brimble, let me out, you scamp !
I shall be stifled here.”
“ Adad,” says Ben, “ ’tis Baggs’ voice,
As Wapping mud it’s clear.”

Then down jumped Ben, and seized a knife,
Ripped up the lawyer’s belly,
And out jumped Baggs, rather stiff and so so,
The truth I plainly tell ye.

A GLIMPSE AT CHARTER-HOUSE LIFE.

A BELL has just given tongue, a regular jangling bell, making the old quads and time-honoured turrets of the Charter-house echo and re-echo. It is the brothers' dinner-bell, and produces, apparently, a magical effect, for forthwith from every doorway and obscure recess issue forth long trains of black-robed personages—wizards, mayhap, or necromancers. On, on the different torrents glide, till they unite in one mighty stream, rush into, and overwhelm the grand hall. Here the black-robed personages form into groups, more or less dense, and gesticulate and prate away on the merits of the approaching dinner; for, be they necromancers or wizards, they evidently relish the good things of this life, and know how to play a good knife and fork. Nay, so impatient are some of them, that one or two slide off slily, take their seats, and commence an onslaught on the dry bread, moistening



it with an occasional draught of small beer. Dinner-time draws on, the brothers take their seats, and the jangle and clatter of voices subside into a dead silence. Suddenly a tall, spare man enters the hall, seizes a small wooden hammer, and in a theatrical manner, and with a look as though fully aware of the importance of the deed he was transacting, strikes one clear, distinct, full blow on the table. Instantly, at that magic summons, the brothers start to their feet with the alacrity of four-year-olds. A solemn pause ensues, and then succeeds another blow, and then another, The striker throws down his hammer like a knight errant of yore throwing down his gauntlet, and rushes out. One of the brothers reads grace, and then the whole bevy sit down to their beef.

And it was truly wonderful to see how the grey-haired necromancers pounded away at their beef. Time might have weakened the body, but most assuredly it had not weakened the appetite. Ding dong, ram stam, they gobbled away : no talking now ; but each laid himself out for vigorous, substantial eating. The grooms cocked their eye, and mayhap grinned : the deuce a bit did the wizards heed it, they still kept gobbling, gobbling away.

All flesh is but grass, and the pleasures of this world soon come to an end. The wizards have satisfied the cravings of their epigastriums, except a few tough stagers, who still keep tearing away ; and each heaves a deep sigh, a sentimental sigh, as the last gobbet of pudding rolls down his offended gullet. And now the theatrical hammer-man again stalks in and strikes three loud distinct strokes as before. The wizards reluctantly and with difficulty rise to their feet, grace is said, and each departs, peching and waddling to their several apartments.

A stranger passing by the entrance of the Charter-house could not, by any means, conceive that a republic, governed by its own laws, and forming a little world in itself, existed within. But so it is ; and, to the members of that republic, the most important community in life. Cut off from the living world, they have nothing to think about or to talk about but their own trivial disagreements, troubles, or pleasures. The death or admission of a brother forms the two most important events of their lives ; and the next in importance is the quality of their beef, greens, or potatoes. Thus they keep on eating, quarrelling, and grumbling from day to day,—a dull, unceasing

round of sameness, like horses in a cider-mill,—personifications of dull-eyed monotony.

The “Brothers” are personages of considerable importance in the Charter-house community. Every evening, at nine o’clock, the chapel bell tolls as many strokes as they are in number, and they are not a little proud of this noisy distinction. In my time we had several personages who had made some little noise in the world, among whom were Cornelius Webb, one of the props of the old cockney school of poetry, and Moncrief, the dramatic writer. Among the *oi polloi*, we boasted two majors, three captains, two commissaries, a land surveyor, a fishmonger, a barrister, a lawyer’s clerk, an upholsterer, three tailors, a triad of booksellers, a cobbler, a publican, a hoyman, and last, though not least, a parson. In fact, every trade and profession sent forth their quota to this miscellaneous and unique assemblage, and every county in Great Britain boasted of its representative or representatives.

I forgot, in the above summary, to include a brace of poets, yclept Joseph Snow, formerly secretary to the Literary Fund, and Davis, emphatically called the Charter-house poet. Of those worthies Davis is

decidedly the most popular, as well as the most clever; and no wonder, as the fat matron is the principal theme of this great poet's lays; and most assuredly the first step towards concocting a mighty epic is to choose a mighty subject.

A VOYAGE TO THE NORTH POLE.

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DEDICATION.

MY DEAR TOM GIBLETTS,

As my companion and friend in the dangerous excursion to the North Pole, I beg leave to dedicate this portion of my great work to thee. The various incidents of that unparalleled voyage often pass in a panorama before my mental vision, and prominent in every scene conspicuously shines forth my old friend Giblett. Hast thou forgotten, oh, friend of my soul! thy raw pork-chop dinner? thy peril on the whale island, or thy flirtation with Miss Fahrtz? Ah, Tom, the latter was a peril indeed! I often think of that peril with fear and trembling; but rejoiced am I, even to the very midriff, that thy good genius proved in the ascendant. Only to think, Tom, of thy fixing thy household lares on a bleak Icelandic cone, feasting on whale-blubber and ice-blobs: yes, Tom, I repeat it, one unvarying, never-ending *three* courses, and a dessert of whale-blubber and ice-blobs.

In thy next voyage to the North Pole, pray, Tom, cut sparables in thy Bluchers. Recollect a twelve-shilling pair is, at the very moment I now write, bound there in adamantine chains—chains never to be broken. Now, no person is more cognizant of the following fact than thee, namely, that it requires great expenditure of wind as well as of voice to earn twelve shillings in the “wegetable wending line.” It follows, that the loss of another pair of twelve-shilling Bluchers would be a serious loss—a loss difficult to be repaired: therefore, I again advise thee to cut sparables,

And believe me to remain,

DEAR TOM,

Thy faithful friend, and fellow-voyager,

GHERIE, THE ANGLO-CIRCISSIAN.

A VOYAGE TO THE NORTH POLE.

CHAPTER I.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE VOYAGE.

It was on the 22nd day of June, in the year of our Lord 1845, that I determined to set out on a voyage in search of the north-west passage. From my earliest years I had read with enthusiasm the graphic accounts of the wonders seen in that romantic clime by our early navigators, and mountains of ice and valleys of perpetual snow were as familiar to me as household words. I was well aware of the arduous nature of the enterprise, yet I threw all scruples which might arise on that account to the four winds of heaven, and buckled up my spirit to do and to dare.

I first of all, in pursuance of my determination, purchased a schooner-rigged *nondescript* kind of craft,

with a shoulder-of-mutton sail, and mounting two six-pounder guns, one in the bows and the other in the stern. The whole hull of the little Spitfire (for so I named her) was appropriated for the reception of stores, except a state cabin aft. I was induced to lay in a superabundance of provisions, because in Baffin's Bay and the country of the Esquimaux I was well aware I should get nothing in the masticating line but lean John Dories tough as bull's hide, dead whale-blubber, or mayhap a jagged angular *chevaux-de-frise* of adamantine ice.

The stock of provisions I laid in, as near as I can recollect, consisted of two hundred-weight of salt pork, six casks of sea-biscuits, one hundred-weight of pemican, one tun of treble-proof rum, and five hogsheads of the best French brandy. There might be, and probably was, an extra hogshead or two of brandy and rum unaccounted for in the above list, as I unfortunately took no inventory at the time; but, however, that may be, I made good account of the whole in the course of my voyage, as my readers will find as they go on.

The Spitfire was made as strong and compact from stem to stern as oak, iron, and copper could make her.

She was crank and crouse as a game cock ; and I do not believe that the devil himself could knock a hole in her bottom. Her masts and spars were tapering and beautiful, indeed symmetry and grace personified, (if I may be allowed so to use the latter word,) her cordage relieved like fairy net-work against the clear blue sky, “ and she walked the waters like a thing of life.”

Now be it known to all men, that I am fond of good living, and such being the case, and having laid on board such an exemplary stock of the good things of this life, it is not to be supposed that I should engage any supernumerary hands whose extraneous epigastriums might deprive me of any part or parcel of the modicum justly due to my own. So being an excellent seafaring man myself, crank and shipshape in every conceivable fashion, I thought I might, with the aid of another good hand, safely navigate the little Spitfire through the arduous and perilous voyage before her ; and what better hand could I propitiate than my old crony and ally, Tom Giblets? I accordingly wrote a note to that worthy, requesting an interview, and appointing the Bag of Nails Inn, Pimlico, as our place of meeting.

Accordingly we met at the appointed place and time. We were ushered into the neat little sanded parlour by Tarbox, the Lambertinean landlord, the very Tarbox who had the remarkable dream recorded in my "Odd Fancies." I ordered some Glenlivet whiskey and cigars, but Tom Giblets, after twisting and screwing his mouth about in the most grotesque fashion, declared, "that for his part he ferred baccy;" and "baccy" was accordingly brought in.

As soon as we were seated, Giblets set to at the "baccy," and soon raised such a densely obscuring cloud, that all that remained visible of my eccentric friend was one eyebrow and the tip of his nose. For some minutes he kept puffing away with a stifled fughing like a half-throttled steam-engine; at length he uplifted his voice, and spoke thus from the bosom of his cloudy sanctuary:—

"What about this ere powl, sir, eh?"

Now I always took great delight in drawing out Tom Giblets, as I was certain to have something striking and original, so I remained silent.

"Be it a shaving powl?" continued Giblets, "or a powl for a dancing bear, eh, sir?"

I still remained silent.

"Be it a lection powl?" continued Giblets.

I still made no reply.

Tom Giblets was now evidently about to propound something extraordinary, beyond the common run of things, for he grunted loudly, took an extra pull at his pipe, and ejected a superabundant volume of smoke.

"Ah! ah!" continued Giblets, "I have it; leave Giblets alone for knowing how to delucidate matters: twopence more, and up goes the donkey; there it is, eh, sir?"

Now this last speech of Giblets was an enigmatical speech, a speech hard to be understood. Giblets from his cloudy tabernacle had propounded a species of Delphic oracle. "Twopence more, and up goes the donkey: there it is, eh, sir?"

"Giblets!" said I, fairly perplexed, "what are you driving at?"

"Driving at the donkey, sir! egad, driving at the donkey! You say you be going to the powl: twopence more and up goes the donkey!"

"Friend Giblets," said I, "the pole I am going to, and, I trust, with you as my mate, is not a barber's, bear's, or donkey's pole, or a 'lection powl.' It is the North Pole, *bona-fide* the North Pole."

"I have no dejection to go to the North Powl, sir," said Giblets, "no dejection at all. I be a venturesome chap, sir, and knows how to wend vegetables. It is, howsomever, wery sartain that poor Sally and Jerry Goggles Giblets will be wery waxed, but we mustn't hang fire at trifles; no, no, sir, egad, no, no. I'm ready for the Powl, sir: my name is Tom Giblets, Giblets at your service!"

So the affair was a settled, done thing; it was brought to a proper bearing in a twinkling.

CHAPTER II.

DEPARTURE OF THE SPITFIRE.

ON the tenth day of July, our preparations being completed, Tom Giblets and myself took leave of our friends and allies and embarked on board our neat little craft, the symmetrical Spitfire. Oh ! how gracefully she spread her snowy canvass wings to the kissing breeze as we weighed anchor ; how beautifully she undulated on the gentle waves as we swept over the bosom of the majestic Thames.

The parting of Tom Giblets from his wife Sally, and his pet boy, Jerry Goggles Giblets, had a curious mixture of the affecting and ludicrous in it. Sally stood upon the beach, wringing her hands and sobbing convulsively, and Jerry was screaming at the top of his bent. Giblets was busily engaged weighing the anchor, every now and then casting a furtive glance at his wife and child. He twisted and screwed his visage about in all manner of

grotesque combinations, but evidently could not place his facial muscles in a satisfactory position. Then, ever and anon, a strange twinkling would come athwart his eyes, and a more than usual degree of moisture would obscure the visual organs. As the Spitfire stood out to sea, and Sally and Jerry gradually appeared less and less indistinct, Tom's contortions manifestly increased, and he turned his quid from starboard to larboard with augmented gusto. At length the beloved objects disappeared altogether. "D—— the baccy," growled Giblets, squirting a huge jet of saliva into the Thames. Having thus wreaked his vengeance on the unoffending "baccy," he put his red-staring belcher before his agitated physiognomy, and burst into a torrent of tears.

Down the majestic Thames we glided amid an interminable forest of masts and spars. The little Spitfire, like an eel, glided hither and thither through the intricacies of the labyrinthine passages: like an eel glided she. Many a rough, weather-beaten skipper stared enviously upon her from his single peeper as she walked past his more tub-like craft; and many a wooden-legged "weteran" (Giblets's nomenclature) banned her for a fair-weather Jack, which would

soon have the shine taken out of her, even in the chops of the Channel.

The little Spitfire, however, gallantly weathered the chops of the Channel, the more angry Baltic, swept past the classic towers of Elsinore, and was still as lively, agile, and shipshape as ever. She seemed to laugh at and to set wind and tide at complete defiance.

Tom Giblets, too, and myself, grew plump and fat ; the northern breezes evidently agreed with us. Our appetites were enormous, and seemed to increase in proportion as we drew nearer and nearer to the Pole. "That ere powl," Giblets would say, "be a rigglar out-and-outer for the appetite. If we go hon at this ere rate, I'm blowed, but we shall wour the hanglar pieces of ice wot be there, and praps that ere powl hitself,—eh, sir?"

CHAPTER III.

TOM GIBLETTS, HIS ADVENTURE WITH THE BEAR.

It was on a fine frosty morning that the little Spitfire first hove in sight of the iron-bound coast of Greenland. The sun shone brightly, and the snow-clad hills and valleys of that romantic country, under the influence of his glittering beams, seemed as though bestrewn with pearls and sapphires. We skirted along a large field of ice, and cast anchor in a small bay under a lofty headland. A log hut peeped above the superincumbent mass of frozen snow, and had doubtless been the abode of the crew of some adventurous whaler. The hut was wretched enough in all conscience, with wide fissures in the walls, through which the wind whistled with a shivery sound. It was not even snow-proof, for small heaps lay here and there beneath those fissures, which had been forced through by the angry blast. "I'm blowed," said Tom Giblets, "if this ere hut be'ant a

rum shop to live in : why Palmer's willage be an out-and-outer to it. Egad, sir, I am thinking I'd better ha stuck to the wegetable line ; this woyage to the powl be a rum woyage adad, sir,—eh ?”

“ You ar'n't about to turn chicken-hearted, Giblets ?” said I.

“ That be too late, sir. Adad, sir ! I'm fairly in for it now : in for a shilling, in for a pound,—eh, sir ?”

A curious and somewhat laughable adventure befel Tom Giblets about this time, of which I shall now give an account.

Giblets had expressed a wish to obtain, by hook or crook, the skin of a bear, and to such a pitch did this wish arise, that he determined to engage in single combat with the first Bruin he met with. In vain I endeavoured to instil into his mind a proper deference for the personal prowess of his wished-for antagonist. All the reply I could elicit was this :—“ I mad a very big promise to Jerry Giblets to take him home a bear-skin, and a bear-skin, by hook or crook, I be desolved to take him.”

One morning, therefore, at sunrise, Giblets perceived a bear on the ice, about a quarter of a mile from the

ship. He was leisurely walking along in deep rumination, manifestly intending no harm to chick or child. No sooner did Tom Giblets perceive him, than he snatched up a rifle, and ran along the shore with the intention of cutting him off from the land, and thus preventing his escape. The bear, however, who was a strapper, appeared to have no such intention, for, on seeing Giblets, he stood stock still, surveyed him with a steady, curious eye, and uttered a loud growl. Tom likewise made a dead halt: he evidently did not half like his customer. He appeared quite chopfallen at seeing the determined port of his gigantic adversary: he fistled about, looked over his right shoulder more than once, and seemed half inclined to bolt. At length, however, he took heart of grace, unstrung his rifle, and discharged it full at his musing antagonist. The ball touched his thick hide, and glanced off as though it had been fired at a brick wall. The bear, however, manifestly felt the stroke, and knew the party who dealt it, for he uttered a hoarse growl, made two or three heavy lumbering plunges towards Tom, gave that worthy a smart tap on the side of his head with his right foot, which capsized poor Giblets heels over head. He

then, in a very unseemly manner, showed his contempt for his antagonist and leisurely walked away.


Tom arose, shaking himself from stern to stern, like a Newfoundland dog after a bathe. He then took to his heels and ran towards the ship at the very top of his speed, plainly thinking that the bear was close upon his haunches. Never did I see Tom exhibit half the alacrity on any previous occasion as he did on this : he seemed metamorphosed from a slow Westminster coach to a Flying Childers. With a race-horse bound he sprung on board, tumbled headlong down the cabin-stairs, and bolted himself in.

"What is the matter, Tom?" shouted I, at the outside of the cabin-door.


"Oh, sir!" whined Tom : "I'm blowed if I be'ant rigglarly flabbergasted! That ere bear be a out-and-outer at puggylistic matters : I'm a done man, and no mistake."

I strived to speak, but could not for laughing.

"That ere chap," continued Giblets, "came sparring up to me like a rigglar milling cove : he gave me a swinging dowse on the chops, and a right-handed nobber : I've lost a hogshead of claret.—Oh, lord ! oh, lord ! I'm a done man,—done brown, sir."



I gathered from the lugubrious lamentations of Giblets, that he ascribed to his own blood what ought justly to have been ascribed to the unseemly practices of the bear; and it was a long time ere I could beat him out of that ludicrous crotchet; and, when I had succeeded in so doing, Tom, with a grave and measured voice, spoke as follows:—"Well, I must say this, that that ere bear was a wery nasty chap, spite of his puggylistic accomplishments. I'm blowed if I have anything more to do with em, they be not genteel coves at all: no, no, I've done with em,—cheap and nasty, eh, sir?"



CHAPTER IV.

TERRIFIC PERIL OF THE SPITFIRE.

ON leaving Greenland we proceeded W. N. W. with a favourable breeze. As far as eye could see, the ocean was covered with immense blocks of ice, of every size and shape, which the most vivid imagination could conceive; and what at first appeared to us most strange and singular, those blocks were continually, and, as though by magic, changing their former shape. If we saw at one moment a gothic cathedral, with its fairy pinnacles glittering in the sunbeams, the very next moment it would assume quite a different aspect, probably an Indian Joss-house, or a Chinese Pagoda. Then mimic turrets and battlements would rise, as it were, from the bosom of the ice-besprinkled waters; then those towers and battlements would fade away, and rugged cliffs or cone-like hills, with their summits broken and splintered, arise in their place. But whether cathedral,

or pagoda, or cliffs, or splintered hills, all were clothed and decorated in the most variegated and prismatic colours, as vivid and varied as the colours of the rainbow.

It was a long time before I could make out how those beautiful transformations were effected. At length I saw approaching us, to windward, a lofty column of ice, resembling a church tower and its accompanying spire. I gazed earnestly upon it, and, as I gazed, I saw it topple over and assume the appearance of a battlemented fortalice. I could not at the moment account for the phenomenon, but, after more accurate observation, I did afterwards ; and, having accounted for one transformation, I had for all. It appears that the surface of the floating ice-block, in immediate contact with the water, gradually melts, and that to such a degree that its equilibrium is destroyed. Consequently, the upper portion of the block being heaviest, topples over, and the iceberg presents quite a different aspect. It must be quite obvious that those immense ice masses thus rolling over are highly dangerous to ships in their immediate vicinity, and many a one has been dashed to atoms beneath their ponderous weight.

We had the greatest difficulty in steering safely between those immense masses of ice. At length, however, we got into smooth water, entirely free from these floating islands, for such they might be termed. The channel through which we now sailed was about half a mile wide, bounded by two extensive ice-fields, on the surface of which screamed and fluttered thousands and thousands of sea birds. Here, also, we first saw the singular phenomena of red snow, stretching away in beds of from a quarter to a half a mile in length. Oftentimes, too, a whale would heave in sight, blowing his tiny cascade into the air with a loud stertorous noise.

On the third day of our threading the intricate channel already described, I saw, with alarm, that it was grown much narrower, and that its still increasing narrowness was owing to the gradual approach towards each other of the two fields of ice which bounded it on its eastern and western sides. Now it was very plain that if those two fields met the little Spitfire would be crushed between them as easily as a child could crush an egg-shell. What could we do in such a dreadful emergency? Nearer and nearer they approached each other, and we expected every

moment to hear them clash together. At length we heard a horrible grating sound proceed from the depths of the ocean, and, to our unutterable surprise, found the Spitfire lifted, by some unaccountable means, out of the water. Higher and higher we were lifted in the air, till we had attained an altitude of five hundred feet. We then found we were on the very summit of the western field of ice. The eastern field being much thicker and more ponderous than the western, had gradually forced itself under the base of the antagonistic ice, and that base being wider and longer under the surface than above, as it was lifted up, of course the Spitfire was lifted up with it.

But now mark the terrific situation of the Spitfire! On the very summit of a lofty iceberg, full five hundred feet high! Suppose the iceberg should lose its equilibrium and topple over, what would become of the beautiful little craft? would she not inevitably be dashed to pieces? The situation was terrible! horrible! and, to increase the horror, the iceberg *is* losing its equilibrium! it evidently moves! it sways! it topples down headlong! and down goes the Spitfire, whirling hither and thither; a heavy, thundering sound takes away the sense of hearing, total darkness

takes away the sense of seeing. The thundering sound, however, ceases, the total darkness is relieved by a gleam of sunshine. The little Spitfire had miraculously fallen into the channel instead of falling upon the eastern iceberg, where she must inevitably have been dashed into a million fragments !

CHAPTER V.

BATTLE WITH A WHALE.

AFTER our miraculous escape from utter destruction recorded in my last chapter, we had a favourable breeze, and a tolerably open sea till we arrived in Baffin's Bay, and here an incident occurred of which I am now about to give a minute account.

We lay becalmed about a mile from land, not a breeze stirred, not even a land breeze. Here and there a distant ripple or mayhap a tiny jet of water proclaimed the presence of a whale; but with that exception all was dull, quiet, and monotonous.

Close to the bows of the Spitfire there appeared an irregular-shaped black mass. It might be an island, it might be the back of a floating whale. Tom Gibletts, however, insisted that it was the former. "It is very much too big for a whale," said Tom; "it be a hisland, no doubt o' that ere: praps that lost chap I once read about in a book of woyages, called I b'lieve

Hatlantish or some sich houtlandish cognimum : I'll see, at all ewents." So saying, Tom crept along the bowsprit and dropped upon the seeming island.

Now it was in reality a floating whale; and no sooner did he find of the liberties Tom had taken with him, than he gave a sudden wallop and a dive, and left poor Giblets sputtering and wambling in the water. It was with the utmost difficulty I rescued him from his perilous situation; and as I was hauling him, half suffocated, aboard the Spitfire, the whale angry, I presume, at being so unceremoniously disturbed in his ruminations, again rose to the surface of the water, lashing out furiously with his tail, and one of those lashes, or more likely only the wind of one, capsized Giblets heels over head on the deck. Slowly Giblets arose, and sitting on his hinder end, broke out into the following lamentations:—

"I thought, sir, a hisland was a dead thing—dead as mutton, sir; but by gor, I find to my cost they be live enough. I'm half throttled with water and sludge, sir; and my nose is beat flat as a pancake: a pretty go, isn't it, eh, sir?"

I had no time to reply to this lugubrious speech, for the whale, apparently excited to the utmost fury,

still kept lashing furiously with his tail in all directions, and was plainly bent on mischief. We were now obviously in the utmost danger, for one well-directed stroke from the sea-monster would assuredly cut the little Spitfire in two amidships, or at least swamp her. I could see no method of escaping such a catastrophe except by injecting into his mazzard a six-pound lump of lead; so I loaded as quick as possible our bow-gun and run it out. It was high time, for the last lash he gave narrowly missed the bows of our ship, nay, the extreme point of his tail actually brushed it. He was now, with widely distended jaws, close a-head, and presented the fairest possible mark, even the most inexpert gunner could not miss it, So I fired bang into the open mouth of the monster. The ball, true to its mark, went crashing down his throat, and through his epigastrium. This one pill was enough for him. He gave a lurch, spouted a column of mingled blood and water high in the air, and then floated on the ocean a lifeless ton of bilge-water and blubber.

CHAPTER VI.

TOM GIBLETTS—HIS EPISTLE TO SALLY—AND HER REPLY.

MY DEAR SALLY,

I'm blowed if this ere woyage to the Powl b'ent one of the rummest woyages ever inwented: all kinds of cuwrious things be to be sawrd, and all kinds of rum things to be gone drough; and to speak the truth, I'd much rather be in Stretten Ground, Vestminster, wending wegetables than out here on this Powl woyage. How is the truck, poor thing?

How is Jerry Goggles Giblets? Poor boy, I'm werry sorry I cannot get him a bear-skin: I lately sawrd one as big as Tom Crump's donkey, fired my muskit at him, and thought to cotch him; and what, oh, Sally! dost think he done to me? Why, he gave me a right-hand nobber and flabbergastered me. There's a beast for ye, eh?

And then I sawrd a big church-stipple a-sailing along light as a brewer's bung in the Tema, and hon the

battilmints of that ere stipple I sawrd a fat church parson with a shovel hat on his yead, crouse-looking as a coal-heaver. He had a tell-a-scope in his right fin, and was yevidintly spying for a congeragation. Slap bang, over-tumbles the parson and stipple, afore you could say Jack Robinson; and, lauks! oh, Sally! the vonder is, that it was not a stipple, or a parson, or a shovel-hat, but a great big lumbering piece of ice.

The next big vonder whot come to pass wos this, that the ice got under the bottom of our wessel and hoisted her up in the hair mountains igh. Never wor there such a queer thing as that ere! Well, all of a sudden down we plops with a whiz whelter and a whirr plump into the weter! Lord ha' mercy upon us! Only to think that the ice should be so wicious! And then I got out for freshment sake on a big hisland, and wose and woser it chonced to be all aloive and kicking. Down it walopped, and drowed me off into the see: well, I wor as near being drowned as possable, and then the hinferral hisland was not satisfied at that ere, but gave me a whop on the nose, and nearly knocked the gumption out of me. He then showed fight at the ship, and the govner fired

a great ball slap down his droat and put an end to his puggylistic creer.

We be still agwain on toward the Powl, but the Lord only knows when we shall get there. Look sharp to the truck, and give my love to Jerry.

Hadoo, hadoo,

TOM GIBLETT'S.

SALLY GIBLETT'S TO TOM.

DERE TOM,

Would you 'bieve hit? Jerry can say da-da and ma-ma! there's a fenonemon for ye! 'bent he a rigglar fenonemon? I should think so.

Your pistol hath filled my art with much hangsiety on thy account, and I am very much wexed about the chuch-stipple and the parson; and only to think about the Spetfire being oisted up in the hair. Sall Tomkins, the jumble wender, has taken hup with the big muffin man hat the corner; it his a very sad vorld to live in. And so the bear flabbergastered thee, what a decided nasty beast that ere bear must be. And Nanse Diggins, of Leg-court, has ad a grumshious battle with Meg Brallagen the Irish happle oman, who gave

her lots of pepper. And only to think habout that ere vicked hisland turning out so rampageous, and up-setting thee in the vater. I hop thy noes is better. Bet Grimes is hin the famly-way by Jack Armlet the blind fidler, and hi ham wery glad thy govnor shot the big bullit down the droat of the hisland.

So no more at prisent,

God buy, my pre-shoes Tom,

SALLY GIBLETTS.

P.S. The happle trad is wery flat, only sold dree fartding worth histerday ; and Dennis Mahoney, the Irish organ grinder, who wos my custmor, bolted, and honly paid one alfpenne, so I lost a good fartding. The truck, poor thing, is wery well.

Adoo, hadoo,

S. G.

CHAPTER VII.

ADVENT OF A FEMALE ESQUIMAUX.

THE frost having set in earlier than we expected, we were immovably beset in the ice about a mile from the coast, fully exposed to the fury of the biting blast. We were obliged to wrap and re-wrap our whole persons in furs of the thickest texture; and if any part of our persons was for a moment exposed, it was instantaneously frostbitten.

Our life was monotonous enough, and we hardly knew how to devour the lagging hours. It is true we paid incessant visits to our larder and cellar, and I know not how the deuce it came to pass, but our appetites grew with what it fed upon. We would make no bones of a dozen pounds each of pork chops and two pounds of biscuits at dinner, and a sufficient and proportionate quantity of fluid to liquify the solids. Still we could not always be eating and

drinking, and oftentimes got into the doleful dumps on that account.

One morning, as we were pacing up and down the quarter-deck of our little Spitfire, we became aware of a female Esquimaux approaching us from the shore. She came towards us in a timid, hesitating manner, although doubtful of the reception she might meet with. She was a short, squat personage, with a broad face and flat nose, and the colour of a much-worn mahogany table. Fish-bones were stuck in her ear and nose, giving her a highly grotesque appearance.

Seeing how timid and fearful she was, I spoke to her in a gentle and encouraging tone; and no sooner had I so spoken, than she seemed wild with joy, and seizing my hand, put it upon the top of her head, and made three low obeisances. "I be moch glad to see Inglees men in dem ere parts, moch glad," said she. I, in my turn, was much amazed to hear her thus speak in broken English, but I afterwards found she had lived two or three years at the American settlement, on the south-west extremity of the country of the Esquimaux.

We invited her on board, and treated her to a good dinner. She seemed particularly fond of brandy, but

of course we did not allow her to indulge too much in that beverage. I, however, noticed that she, from the very first, seemed to entertain a *penchant* for Tom Giblets, and she kept perpetually smirking and sideling up to him. I was likewise amused to see that Tom did not repudiate her advances half so strenuously as in bounden duty as a married man he ought to have done. They soon got quite kenspeckle, and the following dialogue took place between them.

"Pray, my dear," said Tom, with a smirk, "what may your name be, eh?"

"Oh! it be a moch cleber name: one name giben me by a Inglese coptain, who said it be a queen's name in him's own land."

"Out with it, girl," said the impatient Giblets, "out with it."

"Well, then," said the Esquimaux, "if I must tell, I must,—my name be Dolly Fahrtz."

I could not help bursting into a loud fit of laughter, in which Tom and Dolly joined.

The Esquimaux stayed with us the whole day, and her intimacy with Giblets seemed evidently on the increase. Tom twitched, more than once, the fish-bones in her ears and nose, and, when she took her

leave, presented her with two pieces of iron hoop, a coalheaver's hat, and an old pair of breeches.

On the following morning Doll again came over to the ship, but so metamorphosed that we hardly recognized her. She had taken the fish-bones out of her ears and nose and had substituted instead several pieces of iron hoop, the weight of which dragged down her ears and the tip of her nose in the most ludicrous manner. On her head she had stuck the coalheaver's hat, and, to crown all, had put on Tom's old breeches hind before. Never did I see such a queer looking object : it was impossible to conceive a more grotesque *tout ensemble*. I thought I should have died with laughter : I threw myself on the deck, and rolled over and over in my cachinnatory delirium.

Dolly seated herself by the side of Tom, and the twain soon got as thick as inkle-weavers. " I be a moch big Venus, be'nt I ? " inquired Doll. " Sartainly," replied Tom, " a wery big Wenus indeed ; quite a parrigin ; but you ought not to have put on the breeches hind-afore." With that he playfully twitched the iron hoop suspended from her nose : " Don't do that, you wile wagbond, you hurt the ind of my nose, moch hurt it." " Vell, vell," replied

Tom, "I vont pull your nose agen, 'tis wery insulting to pull a lady's nose." "Moch, moch, wery moch insult," replied Doll. "You said, histerday," said Tom, "that a Squamax chief fell in love with you, and made wersed on thee." "So he did," said Doll; "and here dey be in mine own language." Tom received them with the utmost politeness, and handed them to me; and I now present them to the reader, first giving the original, then a translation :—

BRYDD A HARYLOO.

Zwxyd y domyryl,

Swyx e gomyryl,

Dyx i Symyrl,

Bardyloo !

Maxtyd havyryll,

Daxpyg vavyryll,

Simpyx pyvaryl,

Haryloo !

Ostyx Gryggory,

Dystyx Fyggory,

Hylldhard Dyggory,

Bardyloo !

Maxtyd havyryll,
Daxpyg vavyryll,
Simpyx pyvaryll,
Haryloo !

Now for the translation :—

ODE TO DOLLY FAHRTZ.

She is neat
From toe to pate,
Full, complete—
She comes from Xahrtz.
A gushing wind,
A rushing whale,
A mighty seal
Is Dolly Fahrtz.

With eyes of fish,
Lips liquorish,
And nose flattish,—
She comes from Xahrtz !
A gushing wind,
A rushing whale,
A mighty seal
Is Dolly Fahrtz.

There are some words in this "Queer Book," for rendering which literally I am certain I shall incur the abuse of a few mealy-mouthed evangelicals and squeamish old maids. I cannot help it: I will not destroy the unity and homogeneousness of the volume by omitting those words. In fact, they form the pivot upon which the beauties of the work turns; without them it would become silly balderdash. In anticipation, then, of the unmitigated abuse of those worthies, I will give them one word of advice, which, if they take in the friendly spirit in which it is given, will save many a virtuous hearth from grief and pollution. "Do not strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SHIP DRAWN TOWARDS THE POLE BY THE FORCE
OF ATTRACTION.

FROM accurate observations I was in the habit of making daily, I ascertained that the Spitfire, although embedded in an immense field of ice, still progressed towards the Pole ; and the only conclusion I could come to on this point was, that the ice itself moved also. Of course the nearer we got to the Pole, the stronger the magnetic attraction became ; and I was not much surprised to find that our little ship, in consequence of being studded in all parts with iron nails, was peculiarly liable to be acted upon by that mysterious power. Nay, to such an extent did that influence act and increase, that at length she was hoisted, as it were, out of her own element upon the field of ice which surrounded her, and drawn forcibly and swiftly along upon it towards the Pole. The nearer we approached the Pole, the greater did the

velocity of our little barque increase, till at length she went on at the rate of ten knots an hour. I now became seriously alarmed lest, in her mad career, she should rush against some adamantine iceberg, and dash herself to atoms. I therefore seriously set about to devise some method of diminishing the fury of her career, and the only way I could see of effecting that object was to cut or cast away as much of the iron which girdled her as could be safely dispensed with. So Tom and myself set manfully to work, and drew out all the iron rivets and nails we could, substituting wooden pegs in their places; and so determined were we in executing our voluntary and necessary task, that, on the second day of our labour, we had diminished the velocity to eight knots; the fourth day to six, and the seventh day to two knots an hour; and on the tenth day she became perfectly stationary.

The little Spitfire had now arrived at that portion of the earth where it is flattened like an orange, and in the very centre of this flat space we beheld the long-sought-for Pole. It was about half a mile in circumference, and was nothing more or less than a gigantic magnet, smooth as polished ivory. I must confess that it was with feelings of high exultation

that I gazed upon it, upon that celebrated object which had been the admiration, I may almost say worship, of the peril-environed voyager for so many ages. Tom Giblets was, however, far from sharing in my rapture of enthusiasm. "Is that ere great flat round stown the Powl?" inquired he: "why it is all the vorld like a great half-baked pancake. And I have given up wegetable wending, have been flabbergastered by a bear, and knocked heels over yead by a big lumbering hisland, and all for to see that rum cove of a consarn. I'm blowed if it be worth a brown, leave alone a tizzy."

I now took out my perspective glass, and swept the whole horizon in search of the Nor-West passage, but not the least vestige of an opening could be seen, and I was reluctantly obliged to relinquish the hope of obtaining the government reward offered for its discovery.

CHAPTER IX.

PERIL OF GIBLETTS AND THE SPITFIRE.


ON the morning of the third day after our arrival in the neighbourhood of the Pole, I heard a loud outcry from Giblets. "I be on the Powl!" roared he, at the top of his lungs; "and I'm blowed if I can get off: my feet be glued down to it! I'm like a linnet cotched in bird-lime!"

I jumped on the forecastle, and saw Giblets standing on the Pole, on its very centre, immovable, without the power of motion, and at once knew the cause. The shoes of Tom were thickly studded with nails, and he was riveted down as it were by the force of the magnetic attraction. I could not help laughing at the ludicrous position of my fellow-voyager: try, however, I would.

"This ere haffair be no loffing matter," said Tom; "it is wery well for you to stand sniggering there! oh, yes, sir, very well indeed! Oh, wegetables! oh, Sally! when shall I behold ye?"

I was still laughing and gazing at Giblets, when I felt that the Spitfire was in motion, and manifestly receding from the Pole. I was surprised, and could not account for such a singular phenomenon. I, however, hastened aft, and saw what I am about to relate.

I had placed two bear-traps at the stern of the Spitfire, baited with pork. Two bears, a male and a female, of immense size, took a fancy to the savoury morsels, and for their pains got noosed in our cords as neatly as though caught in a Peruvian lasso. Being, however, of immense strength, and the field of ice on which we lay an inclined plane, in their struggles they moved the Spitfire forwards, and being once launched, she proceeded with increasing velocity. Thus we presented a most extraordinary spectacle,—two bears harnessed to a ship drawing her at full speed along the ice stern foremost. “Oh, sir!” shouted Tom, “don’t sail without me: don’t leave me behind you on this cussed Powl! Oh! that I should ever have left Palmer’s Willage, Vestminster.” Here we got out of earshot, but Tom was still evidently shouting and roaring after me, and when I had the last glimpse of him, he was still stuck on the Pole, beckoning me to return.



On go the bears, on goes the Spitfire: helter skelter, devil take the hindmost.

Like Phaeton I lost all control over my steeds; and as we went rushing along the rattling, clashing, and thundering over the ice inequalities, were absolutely deafening. My steeds, in the wildest affright, strained forward at the very top of their speed, and the faster they went the more did the horrid clattering behind them increase. I certainly had not lost the reins, because there were none to lose, and there was no danger of setting the world on fire, but there was the greatest danger of my neck being ultimately broken, and the Spitfire, bears, and all dashed to pieces. On, on we go, the ship rolling, yawing, and wombling about as though among the breakers. The wild birds fled our presence with boding screams, and such bears as were on the ice took to their heels, grunting and growling in the utmost alarm and affright. In spite of my imminent peril there were so many grotesque circumstances connected with it that I could not forbear laughing. It was, however, no laughing matter, for now I saw before me a large strip of ocean quite denuded of ice, towards which we were bounding; and I saw at the same time that

the iceberg along which we were flying terminated in a tremendous precipice many hundred yards above it, and towards the edge of that fearful chasm the bears in their mad affright were hastening headlong. I knew if there should chance to be a block of ice beneath the point where we must necessarily fall, the Spitfire, myself, bears, and all, must inevitably be dashed to atoms. It was a moment of intense—of solemn anxiety; a few fleeting moments, and I might be launched into eternity. On, on we go; we are within twenty, ten, five yards of the yawning gulf! now we are on the brink! and now, with a horrid whirr, we are rolling over.

An awful splash and blinding darkness were all that I can distinctly remember. I must have remained a long time in a state of unconsciousness. When I came to myself, I found myself on board my tidy little ship, floating safely on the gentle ocean. In falling, we had encountered nothing but the crystal waters, and all the evil we suffered was a regular good ducking. The bears, however, did not get so well off, as both lay drowned under the stern of the ship.

CHAPTER X.

GIBLETTS REJOINS ME.

I NOW resolved to stand off and on for the chance of my comrade Tom's rejoining me. All that he had to do was to stoop down, unlace his bluchers, and step out of them. It is true that affright at the first might prevent him from recollecting this obvious fact, yet I knew that he would gradually grow more composed, and in the end kick off his shoes: nor was I deceived, for on the third day after my involuntary flight I saw my hero hastening towards me along the ice.

"Govnor!" said he, as soon as he came within ear-shot, "I am very much deblied to you for leaving me stuck up on that ere Powl: howsomedever, give me a leg of pork, my guts be wombling and curwhirring in a desperate fashin!"

"But, Giblets," said I, "the pork is not cooked, it is quite raw!"

"Never mind that ere," said Giblets, "hand it to me: I could eat a jackass ahind the saddle!"

I handed Giblets the pork, who sat down on his haunches, and commenced tearing and grinding like a famished tiger.

For half-an-hour he kept tearing away at the pork, smacking his lips, and snoring through his nose. He then laid his hand on his stomach, gave a loud pech, and growled out "Govnor, a quart of brandy! that ere liquor will set me all to rights!"

I handed Tom the brandy, who put it to his lips, cocked up his little finger, took a long view of the heavens, and rehande the bottle to me, gave a long sigh or rather groan, and still occupying the same squatting position, addressed me as follows:—

"Govnor, I am deblied tell e I am verry much tired of this ere woyage: I've been flabbergastered, knocked heels over head, frost-bitten in the big toe, kept dree days and nights vithout wittles, and lost my best pair of bluchers on the Powl. I'm blowed if I half like it: I'm dissolved to go back again to Palmer's Wilage, Vestminster: I'm dissolved to give up woyaging!"

"I cannot blame you, Tom, and I am as much tired

as you. Put the ship about, and let us commence our return voyage !”

Tom Giblets, busy as he was, contrived to send by a Leith whaler the following letter to Sally :—

DEER, DEER SALLY,

I've been drough many vonderful ewents since my last pistle. I've sawrd a Squamax wench with ears as long as a donkey's, and what dost think ? Why, I gave that ere gal two pieces of iron whoop, and my hold pair of leather breeches, and she claped 'em on wrong side foremost, there's for ye, eh ? I've been to the Powl, and couldn't lift up my legs vor six ours, and lost my best pair of bluchers, which be stuck fast to the Powl by hat-aro-shion, but what that ere is I'm blowed if I no ; but it some-at strong as a stem hingine. Then I got as thin as a knacker's orse, and yet twelve and half pounds of raw pork at one meal ; and now I be a coming howme,—love to Jerry.

Hado ! hado !

TOM GIBLETS.

On our arrival on the coast of Greenland, a Hull skipper handed the following reply from Sally :—

DEAR GIBLETTS,

What the deuce right had you to be cocketting with that ere Squamax wench? and what right had you to give her the leather breeches? and above hall, what right had Fahrtz to get in your breeches, eh, Tom? I'm wery much hafraid you cannot hanswer these quiries in the manner a usband ought to hanswer. I would not advise the Squamax to come within reach of my ten commindiments, for I'm blowed hif I wouldn't print 'em in her vizomy: I'd teach her that no living oman dar wear your breeches but me! Peg Crump, the saddler's dater, is loped with old Jerry the bagman; and then only to think of losing your best bluchers on the Powl. I sold a bob's worth of vegetables histerday; and the bluchers cost twelve shillings. Tom, I consider you to be too randy by half with the Squamax, and I seriously advise you not to go on with that ere lay. Parson Cantwell have had a kid by Bet Barnacles. Only to think of yetting twelve and half pounds of raw pork! And so no more at present from your hown

SALLY GIBLETTS.

P.S.—Jerry and the truck are both well, poor things; and I feel great hanxiety about the Squamax wench.

Nothing particular occurred during the remainder of our homeward voyage, and we reached old England in perfect safety; but I think it proper to state that so well had we plied our masticatory organs, that out of all the stock of edibles taken out with us, there only remained half-an-ounce of pemican and a gill of brandy!!



CUTS AND SLASHES.



DEDICATION.

TO THOSE ARCADES AMBO, BILLY BLINN THE CRITIC'S
CRITIC, AND SIMON SHATTERWIT THE HATLESS (qy.
Atlas ?) CRITIC.

In placing you in the same category as those famous personages,—Sally Giblets, Bill Proctor, Jack Prosser, and Tom Giblets,—I confer on you a no small portion of renown. Your innate assinine qualities will receive from those worthies a no slight tinge of reflected glory ; and no one will henceforth believe that you erect such immeasurable ears as you do erect. Truly, then, you ought to feel exceedingly obliged, nay, even thankful and grateful to me for the fillip I have administered to your waning reputations. The farthing rushlights which was just going out with a stink are again revived

in all their pristine vigour! Flare up, the
pair of precious numskulls, live and sputter
and believe me to remain,

Your wholesome castigator,

GHERI

CUTS AND SLASHES.

A SLASH FOR A MANCIPLE.

ABOUT half a year after my Epping Forest adventure, I was nominated a pensioner of the Charter-house by the Bishop of London. It is a little town in itself, and stretches away from Charter-house Lane even to Wilderness Row. Access is had to it through an ancient gateway, a precious relic of antiquity, coeval with the foundation of the building. A portion of the building is more modern, and divided into a brace of quads. It boasts of an oaken panelled hall, with a dais at the upper end; and the tower of its chapel is rich and ornate. Upon the whole, it exactly resembles a second-rate college at Oxford or Cambridge.

This monastic retreat was founded and endowed by Mr. Thomas Sutton. A portion of its funds is set

apart for educational purposes, another portion for the support of about eighty persons, denominated brothers of the Charter-house, who have met with misfortunes, and possess good characters. It is under the control of a Master and Governors, the latter generally chosen from the higher aristocracy, each of whom has the power of nominating a brother in turn.

So, as I said before, I was nominated a brother by the Bishop of London ; and one cold March morning I sped to the Charter-house. I did not allow the grass to grow under my feet, for I wanted to see the spot where the end of my stormy career might possibly close in peace. I arrived in due time at the lodge, and announced my business to the porter.

" You must go to the Manciple," said the porter.

Now there was nothing very *outré* in these words, yet, somehow or other, they sounded strange on my ears.

As I steered my course hither and thither in search of the Manciple, I met a rather stout, agreeable-looking old gentleman, who introduced himself to me as the Master. He turned out to be the well-known Archdeacon Hale, and most certainly he was hale. At the end of our conference, he said, in solemn tones, " you must go to the Manciple !"

Manciple again! what the deuce could this mysterious Manciple be who thus met me at every turn? "Was he fish, flesh, fowl, or good red herring?" It was a regular puzzler. The nearest word in sound I could bring to remembrance was mandible; but then mandible was an integral and essential part or portion of an insect; and most assuredly this great manciple could not be of that species of animated life: to imagine such a monstrosity would be as bad as high treason itself. Who, then, or what could the manciple be?

I hastened along a dark, dusky passage, saw a dust-covered door, and over it written, in tolerable large letters, "Manciple's Office." At length, then, I had hunted the tiger to his den; I had nailed the spider in the farther recesses of his convoluted web.

I stood at the door for a minute or two, as though fearing to ring the bell. How could I tell what strange animal would pounce upon me? what horrible gnome, demon, or vampire would appear? There I stood motionless, as though rooted to the ground! I seemed spell-bound!

At length I called resolution to my aid, and buckled up my spirit to perform the daring feat of ringing the

bell. I rang once: no reply. This was ominous enough. I rang again, and this time with success, for a hoarse timber-toned voice shouted out "walk in there." He evidently, however, meant "walk in here." So I opened the door, strode in, and the mysterious Manciple stood before me.

He was, after all, but a so-so personage, with a pot belly and a scarlet face, evidently not worth the fuss and racket I had kicked up about him. As I entered his dingy den he advanced towards me in a fidgetty manner, and came so close to me, that the apex of his protuberant paunch touched the waistband of my breeches. His head was, however, thrown back to proper speaking distance, at least two feet in rear of his belly. "Sir," quoth the Manciple, "you have come to be one of us, eh?" I bowed assent to this proposition, but could not then imagine to whom the "us" applied. "Well, sir," continued he, "as a brother of the Charter-house, and before admittance, you must be sworn in before two governors, produce a register of baptism, and a testimonial of character signed by two or more respectable gents. You will then be required to dine in hall, (I erected my ears at this!) attend prayers at least once a day, and twice on Sundays; you

will have coals, candles, a manchet of bread, plenty of butter, a brace of rooms found you, and ten shillings a week in money." "Ah! ah! Mr. Bard of the Forest," said I, mentally, "here is a paradise provided for you at last! a perfect El Dorado! Ten shillings a week! a manchet of bread! (but what the deuce a manchet was, I knew not,) besides other perquisites! Ah! ah! my boy, you are in high clover for life: your bread is baked, and you have nothing to do but to bask and roll in the sunshine for the remainder of your existence!"

All this passed rapidly through my mind, and I stood in silence before the Manciple. He gazed at me with some degree of surprise, the apex of his belly still touching the waistband of my breeches, his head still thrown back to proper speaking distance, his voice sounding hollowly, and seeming at least a quarter of a mile distant. The Manciple would doubtless have made a first-rate ventriloquist.

The Manciple still stood gazing upon me. "You must go to the Bishop of London on Monday next to be sworn in," quoth a voice proceeding from the coal-scuttle. I looked at the scuttle with surprise. "On Monday next?" responded I. "Yes," replied the

voice, this time proceeding from a writing desk, "and Scraghorn will be there."

"And Scraghorn will be there!" There was something ominous and overwhelming in this announcement. "Scraghorn will be there!" The words were certainly simple enough, but why *should* Scraghorn be there? was he to cross my path for evil or for good? I again stood silent before the Manciple, revolving and re-revolving these words in my mind.

"Good morning, sir," said a voice breaking in abruptly on my reverie, and evidently proceeding from the bread-basket on a dusky table in the far corner of the room. I gazed around me in utter astonishment. Voices had spoken to me from the coal-scuttle, the writing-desk, and the bread-basket! What could it all mean? Was I on enchanted ground? Was the Manciple a necromancer?

I left the den of the Manciple in no small degree of trepidation, and, at the appointed time, sped to the magnificent domicile of the Bishop of London in St. James's Square. And Scraghorn was there! He came, like myself, to be sworn in a brother of the Charter-house, and was as rough-and-ready a customer as you could wish to find on a summer's

day: nothing at all enigmatical or supernatural about him.

His lordship received me kindly. He appeared thin and care-worn: the badgering of the evangs and the press had evidently worked deep furrows on his former open brow. I was speedily sworn in, and then came Scraghorn's turn. When he came to the word "impious," he would, willy nilly, substitute the word "imperious." Vainly did the oath-administrator try to beat, by main force, the proper word into his pericranium. Scraghorn was peremptory: he would be "imperious." The Bishop laughed most heartily: we seemed to be in a dead fix. At length Scraghorn saw the error of his ways, renounced the word "imperious," substituted "him-pi-ouse" (qy. impious?) in its stead, and the business of the morning ended.

Behold me now, then, a Carthusian brother! behold me enter on another phase of my many-coloured existence.

And really a Carthusian brother is not to be sneezed at. Our dining-hall was a beautiful specimen of the ancient baronial architecture, with its wide-mouthed fire-place, and elevated dais; but, to the anti-

quarian, Wash-house Court affords the grand object of attraction : it is a portion of the ancient monastery, and an hour would be profitably spent in viewing its numerous and unique novelties.

A CUT AT SIMON SHATTERWIT, THE
HATLESS CRITIC.

As I was one day walking up the Strand, I saw before me a clumsy, awkward-built personage lounging onwards, bearing on his head an enormous soap-bubble. From the remarkable expression of his stolid countenance, he seemed to think that he was performing some mighty action, tantamount to a dissolution of the great globe itself. It is true the bubble he carried would not overbalance the tenth part of a drachm, yet did he stagger hither and thither as though he supported a ton weight, puffing and blowing all the time like a dying grampus. I was so struck with the ultra oddity of this bubble-bearing personage, that I, in common with a whole troop of men, women, and children, followed him, shouting and yelling as though badger-hunting.

The bubble-bearer, still staggering under his Atlantean load, and still wearing the same self-import-

ant idiotical expression of countenance, now turned up Southampton Street, and after tremendous and unparalleled exertions reached a certain newspaper office, into which he turned with a grunt and a shrug, which almost canted the soap-bubble from his shoulders.

"Who is that strange personage?" inquired I, of a pretty housemaid, who lived next door.

"Simon Shatterwit!" said the little beauty, with a sinister smile.


"What dirt is he after in carrying that enormous soap-bubble?" again I inquired.

"Lauks, sir!" she replied, "he be after no dirt: God forbid he should, sir; he throws too much of that moddity about already: he thinks he be a second Hatlas carrying the big globe, sir,—ha! ha! ha!"

"And he is only a dapper cockney carrying a soap-bubble!" rejoined I.

The housemaid, laughing all over her face, now tripped into the house, and the crowd about the door dispersed in different ways, jeering and yelling in honour of the bubble-carrier.

So then I had earthed no less a personage than Simon Shatterwit, who wrote the review of my "Hunchback's Chest" in "The Atlas"—a review as




memorable for its stupidity as for its scurrility. I at first felt some reluctance to crush such a small-beer abortion; but even a muck-fly if it cannot sting can bedaub. Now I like not to be bedaubed, so I determined to crack him on my thumb nail.

Shatterwit sets out by stating with stolid solemnity, that he has met with me before, and that a strange man I am. Well and good, Mr. Bubble-carrier; not much harm yet. But then the very important fellow goes on to say that I am a poor devil, and that he was reluctant to lay on the whole weight of his critical lash, because I was a poor devil. How much reason I must necessarily have to be humbly thankful for his forbearance! how can I ever be grateful enough? But, Simon, why the words poor devil? Do you know what a poor devil is? Shall I tell you? A poor devil is one who writes for hire, at the dictation of an imperious master, and so that he pleases that master by writing a readable article and pockets his paltry guerdon, totally disregards the merits or demerits of the book he is reviewing; one who stands in a common sewer and throws about filth and garbage upon every person passing by who bears the appearance of respectability, and who vents his slang and abuse princi-

pally on ladies and clergymen, because the coward is aware that the sex of the one and the profession of the other precludes them from inflicting on him that chastisement he so well merits.

Shatterwit goes on to say, that my poetry has made a hole in my head. Why, a boy of twelve years of age ought to be soundly whipped for writing so stupidly. He might just as well have said that an idea would knock down the Monument. If a good cudgel was applied to the skull of Mr. Simon, hard and thick as it is, it would be much more likely to pound a hole there, and his brains would soon be rendered visible, if he has any; but if any should be there, of which I have great doubts, I would, without scruple, bet the Bank of England to a China orange, that it would not exceed the hundredth-part of a scruple in weight.

In the remainder of his review, Shatterwit confines himself to the legitimate objects of criticism, viz., remarks on my book. I do not think it worth my while to notice those remarks further than by saying, that much greater critics than he is or will ever be, have given highly favourable opinions of it, more especially of the poem entitled "Tibaldi, the Demon-



child." Let, then, the mighty Shatterwit vent his scurrility, and throw about his filth and his garbage as much as he pleases: so that he leaves personal remarks alone, he will receive no further notice from me.

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A SLASH AT BILLY BLINN, THE CRITIC'S CRITIC.

MY DEAR CRITIC,

How came you to allow such a consummate ass as Billy Blinn to review my "Hunchback's Chest?" Why, sir, he erects ears of unparalleled longitude! He has the laughable arrogance and insuperable stupidity to assume the regal air of an absolute dictator of public opinion! When and where did his inauguration take place? It must, doubtless, have taken place in that sweetest of suburbs Camden Town, and on All Fools' day.

Scarcely had I finished the above truculent sentence, when who should walk in but Miss Scraggs!! She was attired in full Bloomer costume, and though scraggy and white in the gills, had a much more man-like appearance than Billy Blinn. She sat down without ceremony, and, without circumlocution or *roundaboutism*, commenced the following dialogue:—



MISS SCRAGGS.

Why, sir, you look as fairce as a Lyb-bion tiger !

BARD OF THE FOREST.

And no wonder, Billy Blinn hath been flaying me !

MISS SCRAGGS.

As I wor a-walking down Cheapside, I sawrd a big Newvoundland lying very composedly in the sunshine at his master's door. He wor hevidintly enjoying himself, and thinking no ill of any varsal thing living or dead—in peace with all the world. A little cur dog, with bandy legs, and grievously afflicted with the mange, who wor a-shambling down the strit, tuk it into his wise head that the Newvoundland wor insulting him. He hereupon commenced a series of hoarse barks, snapping with his teeth, and girning as though mad, yet still keeping at a respectful distance, except on one occasion when he touched the extreme tip of the Newvoundland's tail. The noble dog took it very patiently for a long time ; at length he slowly arose and sneezed at the noisy cur, who instantly took to his heels as though half-murdered, filling the street with reiterated howlings.

BARD OF THE FOREST.

What the deuce are you driving at ?

MISS SCRAGGS.

At you, sir ; I am driving at you. You are the Newvoundland ; Billy Blinn the mangy, noisy cur !

BARD OF THE FOREST.

Ha ! ha ! ha ! well done, Miss Dozy, I am obliged to you. But seriously, I have by some means or other incurred the enmity of the Critic's critic, or man of all work. That august magisterial personage is in a perfect ecstasy of wrath. He shakes his ponderous locks, and growls thunder. What devil's broth I have been brewing, I know not.

MISS SCRAGGS.

Do you know Blinn's antecedents, sir ?

BARD OF THE FOREST.

I have every reason to believe he was a tailor ! and, even as a tailor, a very dung.

MISS SCRAGGS.

As vhy ?

BARD OF THE FOREST.

Having heard that Blinn was born at Chew, in Somersetshire, I wrote to Sam Grimes, the parish clerk of that sweet village, and in about three years received (for Sam was not a very punctual correspondent) the following reply :—

ZIR,

I ha made dew quires despecting the yarly life of Billy Blinn, the Critic's critic. He wor never hactually prenticed to the tailoring line, but from his yarliest ears wor exterordinary vond of cabbage. This very naturally engendered wind in the stomak, which Bill mistook for the "divine afflatus of poetry," hence, vrom the very virst, he perpetrated the vilest doggrel. If I sould hear anyzing farder, will form you.

Yours to command,

SAM GRIMES.

P.S.—I stop the poust to nounce to you that about drie years ago Bill was soundly cudgelled in this here place by a vighting parson.

S. G.

MISS SCRAGGS.

A capital letter that, lots of hinfermation, and to the pwoint ; but I must wopperate, ha gagements wery veighty,—good bwye, sir.

BARD OF THE FOREST.

Here is a bit of Bill's poetry. (The Bard shouts after Miss Scraggs.)

I dived down the flashing waters,
Lost my breath and lost my shoe,
There I kissed a pearly mermaid,
Kissed her sweet tu-whit tu-woo !

[Exit Miss Scraggs, laughing convulsively.

A CUT FOR THOSE WHOM IT MAY
CONCERN,

IN AN EPISTLE TO MR. GRUNDY.

MY DEAR GRUNDY,

I can't think how the deuce it is that people address your good lady instead of you; it is undoubtedly a "heavy blow and great discouragement" to your conjugal sway, for we have the highest of all authority for the decisive assertion, that "the husband is the head of the wife." I therefore resolve, on the present occasion, to mete out to you strict and full justice, for the first time in the course of your long life, at least in the epistolary form.

Well, sir! and so you think I had better have stuck to the plough, do you? No more gammon of that kind, sir: let every tub stand on its own bottom, and surely mine is broad enough in all conscience! Let those stick to the plough who love it: I wish not to

cross their path; but if I had my wrinkles to count over again, I should "wheel about" and count just precisely as I did before. I knew very well when I entered the Church, that I could never possess the sweets of "*otium cum dignitate*" in the guise of a rich living; and why? because I was not the bastard or the doltish scion of an aristocrat. I knew, however, that I should have leisure to pursue my darling hobby of literature, which has ever been, and still continues, my meat, my drink, my all! And, friend Grundy, I here beg leave to whisper in your ear, in strict confidence, that I would rather be the author of a readable book, than Archbishop of Canterbury. "Ah! ah! Mr. Anglo-Circassian," (you may exclaim,) "the grapes are sour, are they?" Not so fast, my good friend: I ever looked on the gauds of rank with contempt. I have now as much as I want: richer garments or richer food would only cumber me. I walk hither and thither at my will, and laugh at the great, strutting and swaggering along, thinking themselves something, notwithstanding the gout, the palsy, and the rheum. Pah! friend Grundy, it makes me sick.

Churchmen of high and low degree, you will, doubt-

less, ignore this my valedictory epistle, perhaps maltreat my person. But I advise you to pause before you take up the cudgels. I know there are some capital bruisers among ye, I may say tree-toppers, regular rib-roasters; nevertheless, I venture to bet a cool hundred to a farthing apple cake, that if even your celebrated champion, denominated, *par excellence*, the "fighting parson," should venture into the arena, that I will take the conceit out of him in ten minutes.

Farewell, friend Grundy. Long life and prosperity attend ye!

Thine ever,

THE ANGLO-CIRCISSIAN.

A SLASH AT FOLLY AS IT FLIES.

WONDERFUL INVENTION!!!

ASTONISHING DISCOVERY!!!!!!

THE CELEBRATED MISS SCRAGGS' SELF-ACTING CORN
ERADICATOR!*Description of the Eradicator.*

A LONG iron tube, fixed in a pyramidal cylinder, sets in motion a molindinear jagged calculus, which, revolving horizontally, moves, alternately, a brace of pistons hermetically sealed, and communicates with two parallel fly-wheels working diagonally with sundry indentations at regular distances, admitting the cogs of two perpendiculars, which enclose a keen-cutting quadangular sheet of zinc. A reticulated groove admits the toe at right angles, capable of contraction or expansion according to the sizable dimensions of the corn or bunion.

In using the above machine, so lucidly expounded, the patient must be careful not to poke his or her

toe too far into the groove, for it would not make the least bones of slicing it off; but even in that extreme case, the wonderful inventress has not left the sufferer without a competent remedy. One sixpenny bottle of her

ATRABILIOUS POMADE

will set all to rights!

TESTIMONIALS.

No. 1.

Letter from LIEUT.-COL. COTHER, *of the Ninety-ninth.*

My toe had been a long time battered in breach by a corn—a stout, hard-headed corn, the little toe of my right foot, madam. What to do I knew not: it was invulnerable to steel, and had entrenched itself, as it were, in an impregnable position. The deuce a bit would it move; it would not evacuate. At length, in desperation, I had a shilling pull at your truly wonderful Eradicator, which annihilated it, cut the centre in two in double-quick time.

Yours, ever,

REGINALD COTHER.

No. 2.

*A letter from MISS TABITHA TOESATWIST, Shuttlecock
'Hall.*

My precious big toe had been a long time ailing and shooting, I mean pangs not guns—horrid guns! oh, no! no! Well, what to do I knew not: I tried diaculum, pitch-plasters, brown paper, and soap strap-ping; all useless: the corn still shot, not guns; do not believe it! At length, lucky chance threw me in the way—not as a block, oh, no! to be tumbled over or upon, oh, no!—of Lieut.-Col. Reginald Cother, of the 99th, who introduced me to your truly wonderful Corn Eradicator. A 1½ shilling pull cured me, I mean cured the corn: not field corn, oh, no! do not believe it, but my corn, the corn which grew upon my precious big toe: not the corn which grew in the home croft.

Ever yours, gratefully,

TABITHA TOESATWIST.

No. 3.

A letter from SIMON FLATFISH, of Gowk's Place.

For a long time I had been troubled with a bun-

yan—a whacking bunyan—not him of the Pilgrim's Progress, but a foot bunyan, one which interfered materially with my progress, although no pilgrim; one shilling pull at your celebrated Eradicator destroyed this troublesome bunyan, and I am able to resume my progress without stint, let, or hindrance of any kind whatever.

Yours to command,

SIMON FLATFISH.

No. 4.

A letter from JACK GOSLING, of Shooter's Hill.

Never was there seen such a corn, a devil of a twister, and the least pressure made me twist. Before rain or thunder, it seemed as though a hundred conger eels were gnawing away at it, ram-stam and bang-up there-a-way. I could have no rest, I could have no quiet, and all through this infernal twisting, twitching corn. The corn was my bugbear, my incubus! At length I heard of your celebrated Eradicator, and I rushed to it with still increasing impetus and velocity. I thrust my foot into the magic groove, bang came down the keen-cutting machine, and not only sliced off

my corn, but half my toe too. In my impatience I had thrust in my foot too far, and, with a whiz, off went the corn and half my toe! Out spouted the blood, my muscles began to twitch and wallop about, and locked-jaw stared me in the face. Then it was that I experienced the divine efficacy of your Atrabilious Pomade. Half a bottle of that miraculous fluid poured on the wound set all to rights. I am now as lively as a four-year-old, and set at defiance hail, rain, or even thunder.

Your well-wisher,

JACK GOSLING.

No. 5.

A letter from TOM GIBLETTS.

My Sally had a wery big corn on the soul of er foot, a slap-up haffair, rough as the woof of a she-hass; and what to do vith it, I'm blowed if she could tell. When she troud on a big stowne, it mad her holler hout like a town bul, and she vent hop-a-te-kicking along like a pig vith a woden leg. Nay, so wery wicious did she get that, by gor, she was debliged to gi hup jumble wending. Well, here wor a kittle

of vish. I 'ad enow to do to tend to the truck, and little Sall wor not man enow to despend the boord. I bored away at her fut with a razor, but cut into the quick, and mad her wince like a skittish cowl. Everytheng wor agwain to sixes and sevens, when I heerd vrom Jack Gosling about your Radicawtoor ; and, at long and at length, I perswadid Sally to go to it. Well, she vent, and hafter much hado, swapd hin her fut, which his a moin big un to be sure. Rattle and jam vent the sylander and pisstions, down they cam, and sliced hof hall er fut, corn and hall ; and she gav a scrim and a squawk like a porker stuck in a gat. I then shamocked hof as vast as I cowl, and bought a sixpeeny bottle of your Hatbellyose Pumod, and rubbed it hon her lazeratid sowl, and she got up cured in a brace of secinds, cut a caper, and danced the college orn-pip.

Yours,

TOM GIBLETTS.

P.S. 1st.—Do you want to boy any wery fine permans or cabbages? if zo, vill swap for a bottil of Hatbellyose Pumod.

P.S. 2nd.—Couldn't you try and inwent a mashine to

stop a woman's clapper? 'twould anser wery vell, no doubt of that, bring you in lots of browns, or I be an anser myself,—ha! ha! ha! there's a pun for ye, eh?

Shilling pulls may be obtained at the office of the Self-acting Corn Eradicator, No. 3, Bedford Street, Mile-end; and the Atrabilious Pomade is sold in bottles at sixpence each, at the Poluphlosboic, Oleaginous, and Detergent Emporium, Little Randolph Street, Camden Town; and orders should be sent directed to Miss Scraggs, Scraggs' Villa, Kensington New Town.

THE END.

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